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THE

SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in *Drury-Lane.*

By Dr. *HOADLY.*

The THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for J. and R. TONSON and S. DRAPER in the *Strand.*

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TO

THE KING.

SIR,

YOUR Majesty's Goodness in permitting your Royal Name to stand before the following Piece, is an Instance of the greatest Condescension of a Great Mind. And this Permission, after having honoured the Performance of it with your Royal Presence, the

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more ſenſibly touches Me, as it will naturally lead every one to this Reflexion, That ſo great an Honour would not have been allowed it, had it not appeared free from all Offence againſt the Rules of Good-Manners and Decency.

Thus whilſt your Majeſty ſits as a watchful Arbiter of the greateſt Affairs that ever perplexed *Europe*, You can deſcend to the innocent Amuſements of Life; and take a Pleaſure in favouring an Attempt to add to their Number.

We ſee with Joy, in your Majeſty, an undeniable Proof, That the true Greatneſs and Luſtre of

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a Prince is founded, not upon the Magnificence of Pomp and Shew, and Power, but upon the whole Tenor of a Conduct formed for ſecuring and confirming the Rights and Happineſs of his Subjects. This, being built upon publick Facts, will always remain plainly legible in the Annals of Hiſtory, when the Traces of the moſt delicate Flattery ſhall be all loſt and gone.

When the Records of our Country ſhall barely tell the World the glorious Appearance in this Nation, upon a late trying Occaſion; and ſay----That, upon a violent Attack made upon your Crown, all Orders and Degrees,

all

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all Sects and Parties amongſt us, roſe up, as One Man; not contenting Themſelves to offer their Lives and Fortunes in the Sounds of formal Addreſſes; but actually pouring out their Treaſures, and hazarding their Perſons——That your whole People did not think Themſelves ſafe without Your Safety; nor their Religion, Laws, and Properties ſecure, but in the Security of Your Royal Perſon and Government——When this ſhall be told——This alone, This Voice of the Publick, expreſſed in Deeds, will be the higheſt Paneygrick; greater, and truer Praiſe, than all the Words which Invention and Art can put together

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gether----But I forget myſelf, and my Duty.

I ought not, upon the preſent Occaſion, to interrupt your Cares for the Publick, any farther, than to expreſs my deep Senſe of your Royal Favour and Condeſcenſion; and to ſend up my warmeſt Vows-----That your Majeſty may long enjoy the Fruits of a Conduct in Government, which is the Security to your Subjects of all that is valuable upon Earth!----- That you may live through a Courſe of many Years, the Delight of your happy People; the Example to all the Princes around you, of political Truth and Juſtice, ſuperior to all the little Arts of

Fraud

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Fraud and Perfidy--And that the Succeſſion to the Crown of theſe Realms, in your Royal Line, may never fail to eſtabliſh, and continue the Bleſſings we enjoy, to our lateſt Poſterity. I am,

May it pleaſe your Majeſty,

Your Majeſty's moſt devoted and

obedient Subject and Servant,

BENJAMIN HOADLY.

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PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mr. RYAN.

WHILE other Culprits brave it to the laſt,
Nor beg for Mercy till the Judgment's paſt:
Poets alone, as conſcious of their Crimes,
Open their Trials with imploring Rhymes.
Thus cram'd with Flattery and low Submiſſion,
Each trite dull Prologue is the Bard's Petition.
A ſtale Device to calm the Critick's Fury,
And bribe at once the Judges and the Jury.
But what avail ſuch poor repeated Arts?
The whimp'ring Scribbler ne'er can touch your Hearts:
Nor ought an ill-tim'd Pity to take place——
Faſt as they riſe deſtroy th' increaſing Race:
The Vermin elſe will run the Nation o'er——
By ſaving One, you breed a Million more.
Tho' diſappointed Authors rail and rage
At fancy'd Parties, and a ſenſeleſs Age,
Yet ſtill has Juſtice triumph'd on the Stage.
Thus ſpeaks, and thinks the Author of to-day,
And ſaying this, has little more to ſay.
He aſks no Friend his partial Zeal to ſhew,
Nor fears the groundleſs Cenſures of a Foe;
He knows no Friendſhip can protect the Fool,
Nor will an Audience be a Party's Tool.
'Tis inconſiſtent with a free-born Spirit,
To ſide with Folly, or to injure Merit.
By your Deciſion he muſt fall or ſtand,
Nor, tho' he feels the Laſh, will blame the Hand.

Dramatis

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Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

MR. Strictland,	*Mr.* Berry.
Frankly,	*Mr.* Havard.
Bellamy,	*Mr.* Blakes.
Ranger,	*Mr.* Garrick.
Jack Meggot,	*Mr.* Woodward.
Buckle,	*Mr.* Uſher.
Teſter,	*Mr.* Vaughan.
Servant to Ranger,	*Mr.* James.
Simon,	*Mr.* Bransby.
Chairmen, Footmen, &c.	

WOMEN.

Mrs. Strictland,	*Mrs.* Elmy.
Clarinda,	*Mrs.* Pritchard.
Jacintha,	*Mrs.* Willoughby.
Lucetta,	*Mrs.* Green.
Landlady,	*Mrs.* Yates.
Milliner,	*Miſs* Cole.
Maid,	*Mrs.* Simpſon.

SCENE, *LONDON.*

THE

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THE

SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Ranger's *Chambers in the* Temple.

A knocking is heard at the Door for ſome time; when Ranger *enters, having let himſelf in.*

ONCE more I am got ſafe to the *Temple*—let me reflect a little——I have ſate up all Night. I have my Head full of bad Wine, and the Noiſe of Oaths, Dice, and the damn'd tingling of Tavern Bells; my Spirits jaded, and my Eyes ſunk into my Head: and all this for the Converſation of a Company of Fellows I deſpiſe. Their Wit lies only in Obſcenity, their Mirth in Noiſe, and their Delight in a Box and Dice. Honeſt *Ranger*, take my Word for it, thou art a mighty ſilly Fellow.

Enter Servant, *with a Wig dreſs'd.*

Where have you been, Raſcal? If I had not had the Key in my Pocket, I muſt have waited at the Door in this dainty Dreſs.

Serv. I was only below combing out your Honour's Wig.

Rang. Well, give me my Cap.— [*Pulling off his Wig.*]

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Why, how like a raking Dog do you look, compar'd to that ſpruce, ſober Gentleman—Go, you batter'd Devil, and be made fit to be ſeen.

[*Throwing his Wig to the Servant.*

Serv. Cod, my Maſter's very merry this Morning. [*Exit.*

Rang. And now for the Law. [*Sits down and reads.*

Tell me no more; I am deceiv'd,
That Cloe's *falſe and common.*
By Heav'n, I all along believ'd
She was a very Woman.
As ſuch I lik'd, as ſuch careſs'd;
She ſtill was conſtant, when poſſeſt:
She could do more for no Man.

Honeſt *Congreve* was a Man after my own Heart.

Servant paſſes over the Stage.

Have you been for the Money this Morning, as I order'd you?

Serv. No, Sir. You bad me go before you was up—I did not know your Honour meant before you went to Bed.

Rang. None of your Jokes, I pray; but to Buſineſs—Go to the Coffee-houſe, and enquire if there has been any Letter or Meſſage left for me.

Serv. I ſhall, Sir. [*Exit.*

Rang. [repeating.] *You think ſhe's falſe, I'm ſure ſhe's kind,*
I take her Body, you her Mind.
Which has the better Bargain?

Oh, that I had ſuch a ſoft, deceitful Fair to lull my Senſes to their defir'd Sleep—[*Knocking at the Door.*] Come in.

Enter Simon.

Oh, Maſter *Simon*, is it you? How long have you been in Town?

Simon. Juſt come, Sir, and but for a little time neither; and yet I have as many Meſſages as if we were to ſtay the whole Year round. Here they are, all of them. [*Pulls*

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[*Pulls out a Number of Cards.*] And among them one for your Honour.

Rang. [Reads.] Clarinda's *Compliments to her Couſin* Ranger, *and ſhould be glad to ſee him for ever ſo little a time that he can be ſpar'd from the more weighty Buſineſs of the Law*——Ha! ha! ha! the ſame merry Girl I ever knew her.

Simon. My Lady is never ſad, Sir. [*Knocking at the Door.*

Rang. Pr'ythee, *Simon*, open the Door.

Enter Milliner.

Well, Child——and who are you?

Mille. Sir, my Miſtreſs gives her Service to you, and has ſent you home the Linnen you beſpoke.

Rang. Well, *Simon*, my Service to your Lady, and let her know I will moſt certainly wait upon her——I am a little buſy, *Simon*——and ſo——

Simon. Ah, you're a Wag, Maſter *Ranger*, you're a Wag——but Mum for that. [*Exit.*

Rang. I ſwear, my Dear, you have the prettieſt pair of Eyes——the lovelieſt pouting Lips——I never ſaw you before.

Mille. No, Sir!——I was always in the Shop.

Rang. Were you ſo? Well, and what does your Miſtreſs ſay?——The Devil fetch me, Child, you look'd ſo prettily, that I could not mind one Word you ſaid.

Mille. Lard, Sir, you are ſuch another Gentleman! Why, ſhe ſays, ſhe is ſorry ſhe could not ſend them ſooner. Shall I lay them down?

Rang. No, Child. Give 'em me.——Dear little ſmiling Angel—— [*Catches, and kiſſes her.*

Mille. I beg, Sir, you would be civil.

Rang. Civil? Egad, I think I am very civil.

[*Kiſſes her again.*

Enter Servant, and Bellamy.

Serv. Sir, Mr. *Bellamy*.

Rang. Damn your Impertinence——Oh, Mr. *Bellamy*, your Servant.

Mille. What ſhall I ſay to my Miſtreſs?

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Rang. Bid her make half a dozen more; but before you bring them home yourself. [*Exit* Milliner.] Phah! Pox! Mr. *Bellamy*, how should you like to be serv'd so yourself?

Bella. How can you, *Ranger*, for a Minute's Pleasure, give an innocent Girl the Pain of Heart I am confident she felt?—There was a modest Blush upon her Cheek convinces me she is honest.

Rang. May be so. I was resolv'd to try, however.

Bella. Fy, *Ranger*,—will you never think?

Rang. Yes, but I can't be always thinking. The Law is a damnable dry Study, Mr. *Bellamy*, and without something now and then to amuse, and relax, it would be too much for my Brain, I promise ye,—But I am a mighty sober Fellow grown—Here have I been at it these three Hours—but the Wenches will never let me alone.——

Bella. Three Hours!—Why, do you usually study in such Shoes and Stockings?

Rang. Rat your inquisitive Eyes. *Ex pede Herculem*, Egad, you have me. The Truth is, I am but this Moment return'd from the Tavern. What, *Frankly* here too?

Enter Frankly.

Frank. My Boy *Ranger*, I am heartily glad to see you. *Bellamy*, let me embrace you, You are the Person I want. I have been at your Lodgings, and was directed hither.

Rang. It is to him then I am oblig'd for this Visit: But with all my Heart—He is the only Man, to whom I don't care how much I am oblig'd.

Bella. Your very humble Servant, Sir.

Frank. You know, *Ranger*, I want no Inducement to be with you. But—You look sadly—What—No mercileſs Jade has—Has she?

Rang. No, no. Sound as a Roach, my Lad. I only got a little too much Liquor last Night, which I have not slept off yet.

Bella. Thus, *Frankly*, it is every Day. All the Morning his Head akes, at Noon he begins to clear up, towards

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ward Evening he is good Company, and all Night he is carefully providing for the same Course the next Day.

Rang. Why, I must own, my ghostly Father, I did relapse a little last Night, just to furnish out a decent Confession for the Day.

Frank. And he is now doing Penance for it. Were you his Confessor indeed, you could not well desire more.

Rang. *Charles*, he sets up for a Confessor with the worst Grace in the World. Here has he been reproving me for being but decently civil to my Millener. Plague I because the Coldness of his Constitution makes him insensible of a fine Woman's Charms, every body else must be so too.

Bella. I am no less sensible of their Charms than you are; tho' I cannot kiss every Woman I meet, or fall in Love, as you call it, with every Face which has the Bloom of Youth upon it. I would only have you a little more frugal of your Pleasures.

Frank. My dear Friend, this is very pretty talking. But let me tell you, it is in the Power of the very first Glance from a fine Woman utterly to disconcert all your Philosophy.

Bella. It must be from a fine Woman then: and not such, as are generally reputed so——And it must be a thorough Acquaintance with her too, that will ever make an Impression on my Heart.

Rang. Would I could see it once! For when a Man has been all his Life hoarding up a Stock, without allowing himself common Necessaries; it tickles me to the Soul to see him lay it all out upon a wrong Bottom, and become a Bankrupt at last.

Bella. Well, I don't care how soon you see it. For the Minute I find a Woman capable of Friendship, Love, and Tenderness, with Good-sense enough to be always easy, and Good-nature enough to like me: I will immediately put it to the Trial, which of us shall have the greatest Share of Happiness from the Sex, You or I.

Rang. By marrying her, I suppose! Capable of Friendship, Love, and Tenderness, ha, ha, ha! That a Man of your Sense should talk so. If she be capable of Love,

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'tis all I require of my Miſtreſs; and as every Woman, who is young, is capable of Love, I am very reaſonably in Love with every young Woman I meet.——My Lord *Coke*, in a Caſe I read this Morning, ſpeaks my Senſe.

Both. My Lord *Coke*!

Rang. Yes, *my* Lord *Coke*. What he ſays of one Woman, I ſay of the whole Sex. *I take their Bodies, you their Minds; which has the better Bargain?*

Frank. There is no arguing with ſo great a Lawyer. Suppoſe therefore we adjourn the Debate to ſome other time. I have ſome ſerious Buſineſs with Mr. *Bellamy*, and you want Sleep, I am ſure.

Rang. Sleep! mere loſs of Time, and Hindrance of Buſineſs—We Men of Spirit, Sir, are above it.

Bella. Whither ſhall we go?

Frank. Into the *Park*. My Chariot is at the Door.

Bella. Then if my Servant calls, you'll ſend him after us. [*Exeunt.*

Rang. I will. [*Looking on the Card.*] *Clarinda's* Compliments.—A pox of this Head of mine! Never once to ask where ſhe was to be found. It's plain ſhe is not one of us, or I ſhould not have been ſo remiſs in my Inquiries.—No matter—I ſhall meet her in my Walks.

Servant enters.

Serv. There is no Letter nor Meſſage, Sir.

Rang. Then my Things, to dreſs. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A CHAMBER.

Enter Mrs. Strictland, *and* Jacintha, *meeting.*

Mrs. Strict. Good-morrow, my dear *Jacintha*.

Jacin. Good-morrow to you, Madam. I have brought my Work, and intend to ſit with you this Morning. I hope you have got the better of your Fatigue. Where is *Clarinda*? I ſhould be glad if ſhe wou'd come, and work with us.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Strict. She work! She is too fine a Lady to any thing. She is not ſtirring yet—we muſt let h have her Reſt. People of her waſte of Spirits requ more time to recruit again.

Jacin. It is pity ſhe ſhould be ever tir'd with what ſo agreeable to every body elſe. I am prodigiou pleas'd with her Company.

Mrs. Strict. And when you are better acquainte you will be ſtill more pleas'd with her. You muſt ra her upon her Partner at *Bath:* for, I fancy, Part of h Reſt has been diſturb'd on his Account.

Jacin. Was he really a pretty Fellow?

Mrs. Strict. That I can't tell. I did not dance myſe and ſo did not much mind him. You muſt have t whole Story from herſelf.

Jacin. Oh, I warrant ye, I get it all out. None s ſo proper to make Diſcoveries in Love, as thoſe w are in the Secret themſelves.

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Madam, Mr. *Strictland* is inquiring for yo Here has been Mr. *Buckle* with a Letter from his Maſt which has made him very angry.

Jacin. Mr. *Bellamy* ſaid indeed he would try h once more, but I fear it will prove in vain. Tell yo Maſter, I am here. [*Exit* Lucetta.] What ſignifies Fo tune, when it only makes us Slaves to other People?

Mrs. Strict. Do not be uneaſy, my *Jacintha.* Y ſhall always find a Friend in me: But as for Mr. *Stri land,* I know not what ill Temper hangs about h lately. Nothing ſatisfies him. You ſaw how he r ceiv'd us when we came off our Journey. Tho' *Ca rinda* was ſo good Company; he was barely civil to h and downright rude to me.

Jacin. I cannot help ſaying, I did obſerve it.

Mrs. Strict. I ſaw you did. Huſh! he's here.

Enter Mr. Strictland.

Mr. Strict. Oh, Your Servant, Madam! Here, have receiv'd a Letter from Mr. *Bellamy,* wherein

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desires I would once more hear what he has to say—— You know my Sentiments——Nay, so does he.

Jacin. For Heaven's sake consider, Sir. This is no new Affair, no sudden start of Passion——We have known each other long. My Father valued and lov'd him, and I am sure, were he alive, I should have his Consent.

Mr. Strict. Don't tell me. Your Father would not have you marry against his Will; neither will I, against mine: I am your Father now.

Jacin. And you take a fatherly Care of me.

Mr. Strict. I wish I had never had any thing to do with you.

Jacin. You may easily get rid of the Trouble.

Mr. Strict. By listening, I suppose, to the young Gentleman's Proposals.

Jacin. Which are very reasonable in my Opinion.

Mr. Strict. Oh, very modest ones truly; and a very modest Gentleman he is that proposes them! A Fool, to expect a Lady of Thirty Thousand Pounds Fortune should, by the Care and Prudence of her Guardian, be thrown away upon a young Fellow not worth three Hundred a Year. He thinks being in Love is an Excuse for this; but I am not in Love. What does he think will excuse me?

Mrs. Strict. Well, but Mr. *Strictland*, I think the Gentleman should be heard.

Mr. Strict. Well, well. Seven o'Clock's the time, and if the Man has had the good Fortune, since I saw him last, to persuade somebody, or other, to give him a better Estate, I give him my Consent----not else. His Servant waits below. You may tell him, I shall be at home. [*Exit* Jacin.] But where is your Friend, your other Half, all this while? I thought you could not have breath'd a Minute without your *Clarinda*.

Mrs. Strict. Why the Truth is, I was going to see what makes her keep her Chamber so long.

Mr. Strict. Look ye, Mrs. *Strictland*, you have been asking me for Money this Morning. In plain Terms, not one Shilling shall pass through these Fingers, till you have clear'd my House of this *Clarinda*.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Strict. How can her innocent Gaiety have offended you? She is a Woman of Honour, and has as many good Qualities——

Mr. Strict. As Women of Honour generally have. I know it, and therefore am uneasy.

Mrs. Strict. But, Sir,——

Mr. Strict. But, Madam,——*Clarinda*, nor e'er a Rake of fashion in *England*, shall live in my Family to debauch it.

Mrs. Strict. Sir, she treated me with so much Civility in the Country, that I thought I could not do less than invite her to spend as much time with me in Town, as her Engagements would permit. I little imagin'd you could have been displeas'd at my having so agreeable a Companion.

Mr. Strict. There was a Time, when I was Company enough for leisure Hours.

Mrs. Strict. There was a Time when every Word of mine was sure of meeting with a Smile: But those happy Days, I know not why, have long been over.

Mr. Strict. I cannot bear a Rival, even of your own Sex. I hate the very Name of female Friends. No two of you can ever be an Hour by yourselves, but one or both are the worse for it.

Mrs. Strict. Dear Mr. *Strictland*——

Mr. Strict. This I know——and will not suffer.

Mrs. Strict. It grieves me, Sir, to see you so much in earnest: But to convince you how willing I am to make you easy in every thing, it shall be my request to her to remove immediately.

Mr. Strict. Do it then——hark ye?——Your Request?——Why yours? It's mine.——My Command——Tell her so——I will be Master in my own Family, and I care not who knows it.

Mrs. Strict. You right me, Sir.——But it shall be as you please. [*In Tears.*] [*Goes out.*

Mr. Strict. Ha! have I not gone too far? I am not Master of myself——Mrs. *Strictland*——[*She returns.*] Understand me right. I do not mean, by what I have said, that I suspect your Innocence: But by crushing

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this growing Friendship all at once, I may prevent a Train of Mischief which you do not foresee. I was perhaps too harsh, therefore do it in your own way—But let me see the House fairly rid of her.

[*Exit Mr.* Strictland.

Mrs. Strict. His Earnestness in this Affair amazes me. I am sorry I made this Visit to *Clarinda*—and yet I'll answer for her Honour.—What can I say to her? Necessity must plead in my Excuse—For at all Events, Mr. *Strictland* must be obey'd. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

St. JAMES'S PARK.

Enter Bellamy *and* Frankly.

Frank. Now, *Bellamy*, I may unfold the Secret of my Heart to you with greater Freedom; for tho' *Ranger* has Honour, I am not in a Humour to be laugh'd at. I must have one, that will bear with my Impertinence, sooth me into Hope, and, like a Friend indeed, with Tenderness advise me.

Bella. I thought you appeared more grave than usual.

Frank. Oh! *Bellamy*, my Soul is so full of Joy, of Pain, Hope, Despair, and Extasy, that no Word but Love is capable of expressing what I feel.

Bella. Is Love the Secret *Ranger* is not fit to hear? In my mind, he wou'd prove the more able Counsellor. And is all the gay Indifference of my Friend at last reduced to Love?

Frank. Even so—Never was Prude more resolute in Chastity and Ill-nature, than I was fix'd in Indifference: But Love has rais'd me from that inactive State above the Being of a Man.

Bella. Faith, *Charles*, I begin to think it has—But pray, bring this Rapture into order a little, and tell me regularly, how, where, and when.

Frank. If I was not most unreasonably in Love, those horrid Questions would stop my Mouth at once. But as I am arm'd against Reason—I answer—at *Bath*—on *Tuesday*, she danced and caught me.

Bella.

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Bella. Danced? —— and was that all? But who is she? What is her Name? her Fortune? where does she live?

Frank. Hold! hold! not so many hard Questions. Have a little Mercy. I know but little of her, that's certain. But all I do know, you shall have. That Evening was the first of her appearing at *Bath*. The Moment I saw her, I resolved to ask the Favour of her Hand. But the easy Freedom, with which she gave it, and her unaffected Good-humour during the whole Night, gain'd such a Power over my Heart, as none of her Sex could ever boast before. I waited on her home, and the next Morning, when I went to make the usual Compliments, the Bird was flown. She had set out for *London* two Hours before; and in a Chariot and Six—you Rogue.

Bella. But was it her own, *Charles?*

Frank. That I don't know; but it looks better than being drag'd to Town in the Stage. That day and the next I spent in Inquiries. I waited on the Ladies who came with her. They knew nothing of her. So, without learning either her Name or Fortune, I e'en call'd for my Boots, and rode Post after her.

Bella. And how do you find yourself after your Journey?

Frank. Why, as yet, I own, I am but upon a cold Scent. But a Woman of her Sprightliness and Gentility cannot but frequent all publick Places; and when once she is found, the Pleasure of the Chace will over-pay the Pains of rousing her. ——Oh! *Bellamy*, there was something peculiarly charming in her, that seem'd to claim my farther Acquaintance: and if in the other more familiar Parts of Life she shine with that superior Lustre; and at last I win her to my Arms, how shall I bless my Resolution in pursuing her!

Bella. But if at last she should prove unworthy——

Frank. I would endeavour to forget her.

Bella. Promise me that, *Charles*, [*Takes his Hand.*] and I allow——But we are interrupted.

Enter

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Enter Jack Meggot.

Jack Meg. Whom have we here? my old Friend *Frankly?* Thou art grown a meer Antique since I saw thee? How hast thou done these five hundred Years?

Frank. Even as you see me; well, and at your Service, ever.

Jack Meg. Ha! who's that?

Frank. A Friend of mine. Mr. *Bellamy*, this is *Jacky Meggot*, Sir, as honest a Fellow as any in Life.

Jack Meg. Pho! prithee! Pox! *Charles*—— Don't be silly——Sir, I am your humble——Any one, who is a Friend of my *Frankly's*, I am proud of embracing.

Bella. Sir, I shall endeavour to deserve your Civility.

Jack Meg. Oh! Sir,—Well! *Charles*, what? Dumb? Come, come; you may talk, tho' you have nothing to say, as I do——Let us hear, where have you been?

Frank. Why, for this last Week, *Jack*, I have been at *Bath*.

Jack Meg. *Bath!* the most ridiculous Place in Life!—amongst Tradesmen's Wives that hate their Husbands, and People of Quality that had rather go to the Devil than stay at home. People of no Taste—no *Gout*—and for *Divertiments*, if it were not for the Puppet-show, *La Virtu* would be dead amongst them.——But the News, *Charles*,—the Ladies,—I fear, your Time hung heavy on your Hands, by the small Stay you made there.

Frank. Faith, and so it did, *Jack*. The Ladies are grown such Idiots in Love——The Cards have so debauch'd their five Senses, that Love, almighty Love himself, is utterly neglected.

Jack Meg. It is the strangest thing in Life, but it is just so with us abroad. Faith! *Charles!* To tell you a Secret, which I don't care, if all the World knows. I am almost surfeited with the Services of the Ladies; the modest ones I mean. The vast Variety of Duties they expect—— as dressing up to the Fashion, losing fashionably, keeping fashionable Hours, drinking fashionable Liquors, and fifty other such irregular Niceties so ruin a Man's

Man's Pocket and Constitution, that forsooth! he must have the Estate of a Duke, and the Strength of a Gondolier, who would list himself into their Service!

Frank. A free Confession truly, *Jack*, for one of your Coat.

Bella. The Ladies are oblig'd to you.

Enter Buckle, *with a Letter to* Bellamy.

Jack Meg. Oh! Lard! *Charles!* I have had the greatest Misfortune in Life, since I saw you — Poor *Otho*, that I brought from *Rome* with me, is dead.

Frank. Well! well! get you another, and all will be well again.

Jack Meg. No! the Rogue broke me so much *China*, and gnaw'd my *Spanish* Leather Shoes so filthily, that when he was dead, I began not to endure him.

Bella. Exactly at Seven! Run back, and assure him I will not fail. [*Exit* Buckle.] Dead? Pray, who was the Gentleman?

Jack Meg. This Gentleman was my Monkey, Sir, — an odd sort of a Fellow that used to divert me, — and pleased every body so at *Rome*, that he always made one in our *Conversations* — But Mr. *Bellamy*, I saw a Servant, I hope no Engagement. For you two positively shall dine with me. I have the finest *Macaroni* in Life. Oblige me so far.

Bella. Sir — your Servant! what say you, *Frank*?

Jack Meg. Pho! Pox! *Charles!* you shall go. My Aunts think you begin to neglect them; and old Maids, you know, are the most jealous Creatures in Life.

Frank. Ranger swears they can't be Maids, they are so good-natur'd! Well! I agree, on Condition I may eat what I please, and go away just when I will.

Jack Meg. Ay! ay! you shall do just what you will. But how shall we do? My Post-Chaise won't carry us all.

Frank. My Chariot is here; and I will conduct Mr. *Bellamy*.

Bella. Mr. *Meggot* — I beg pardon, I can't possibly dine out of Town! I have an Engagement early in the Evening. —

Jack

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Jack Meg. Out of Town! No, my Dear; I live just by. I see one of the *Dilettanti*, I would not miss speaking to for the Universe. And so I expect you at Three. [*Exit.*

Frank. Ha! ha! ha! and so you thought you had at least fifty Miles to go Post for a Spoonful of *Macaroni*.

Bella. I suppose then, he is just come out of the Country.

Frank. Nor that neither. I would venture a Wager, from his own House hither, or to an Auction or two of old dirty Pictures, is the utmost of his Travels to-day: Or he may have been in Pursuit, perhaps, of a new Cargo of *Venetian Tooth-picks*.

Bella. A special Acquaintance I have made to-day!

Frank. For all this, *Bellamy*, he has a Heart worthy your Friendship. He spends his Estate freely, and you cannot oblige him more, than by shewing him how he can be of Service to you.

Bella. Now you say something. It is the Heart, *Frankly*, I value in a Man.

Frank. Right! —— and there is a Heart even in a Woman's Breast that is worth the Purchase, or my Judgment has deceiv'd me. Dear *Bellamy*, I know your Concern for me. See her first, and then blame me, if you can.

Bella. So far from blaming you, *Charles*, that if my Endeavours can be serviceable, I will beat the Bushes with you.

Frank. That I am afraid will not do. For you know less of her than I. But if in your Walks you meet a finer Woman than ordinary, let her not escape till I have seen her. —— Whereso'er she is, she cannot long lie hid. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

St. JAMES's PARK.

Enter Clarinda, Jacintha *and Mrs.* Strictland.

Jacin. AY! ay! we both ſtand condemn'd out of our own Mouths.

Clar. Why—I cannot but own—I never had a thought of any Man that troubled me, but of him.

Mrs. Strict. Then I dare ſwear, by this time, you heartily repent your leaving *Bath* ſo ſoon.

Clar. Indeed you are miſtaken. I have not had one Scruple ſince.

Jacin. Why, what one Inducement can he have ever to think of you again?

Clar. Oh! the greateſt of all Inducements, Curioſity. Let me aſſure you, a Woman's ſureſt Hold over a Man is to keep him in Incertainty. As ſoon as ever you put him out of Doubt, you put him out of your Power: But when once a Woman has awak'd his Curioſity, ſhe may lead him a Dance of many a troubleſome Mile without the leaſt fear of loſing him at laſt.

Jacin. Now do I heartily wiſh he may have Spirit enough to follow, and uſe you as you deſerve. Such a Spirit, with but a little Knowledge of our Sex, might put that Heart of yours into a ſtrange Flutter.

Clar. I care not how ſoon. I long to meet with ſuch a Fellow. Our modern Beaus are ſuch jointed Babies in Love, they have no Feeling. They are intirely inſenſible either of Pain or Pleaſure, but from their own dear Perſons: And according as we flatter, or affront their Beauty, they admire or forſake ours. They are not worthy even our Diſpleaſure; and, in ſhort, abuſing them is but ſo much ill-nature merely thrown away. But the Man of Senſe, who values himſelf upon his high Abilities:

Or

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Or the Man of Wit, who thinks a Woman beneath his Converſation——To ſee ſuch the Subjects of our Power, the Slaves of our Frowns and Smiles, is glorious indeed!

Mrs. Strict. No Man of Senſe, or Wit either, if he be truly ſo, ever did, or ever can think a Woman of Merit beneath his Wiſdom to converſe with.

Jacin. Nor will ſuch a Woman value herſelf upon making ſuch a Lover uneaſy.

Clar. Amazing! Why, every Woman can give Eaſe? You cannot be in earneſt.

Mrs. Strict. I can aſſure you ſhe is, and has put in practice the Doctrine ſhe has been teaching.

Clar. Impoſſible! Who ever heard the Name of Love mention'd without an Idea of Torment? But pray let us hear.

Jacin. Nay, there is nothing to hear that I know of.

Clar. So I ſuſpected, indeed! The Novel is not likely to be long, when the Lady is ſo well prepar'd for the *Denouement*.

Jacin. The Novel, as you call it, is not ſo ſhort as you may imagine. I and my Spark have been long acquainted. As he was continually with my Father, I ſoon perceiv'd he lov'd me, and the Manner of his expreſſing that Love was what pleas'd and won me moſt.

Clar. Well! and how was it? The old Bait? Flattery? Dear Flattery, I warrant ye.

Jacin. No, indeed,——I had not the Pleaſure of hearing my Perſon, Wit, and Beauty painted out with forced Praiſes; but I had a more ſenſible Delight in perceiving the Drift of his whole Behaviour was to make every Hour of my Time paſs away agreeably.

Clar. The Ruſtick! What, did he never ſay a handſom thing of your Perſon?

Mrs. Strict. He did, it ſeems, what pleas'd her better. He flatter'd her good Senſe as much as a leſs cunning Lover would have done her Beauty.

Clar. On my Conſcience, you are well match'd.

Jacin. So well, that if my Guardian denies me Happineſs, (and this Evening he is to paſs his final Sentence) nothing is left but to break my Priſon, and fly into my Lover's Arms for Safety. *Clar.*

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Clar. Hey Day! O my Conſcience thou art a brave Girl. Thou art the very firſt Prude, that ever had Honeſty enough to avow her Paſſion for a Man.

Jacin. And thou art the firſt finiſh'd Coquet who ever had any Honeſty at all.

Mrs. Strict. Come, come! You are both too good for either of thoſe Characters.

Clar. And my dear Mrs. *Strictland* here is the firſt young married Woman of Spirit, who has an ill-natur'd Fellow for a Husband, and never once thinks of uſing him as he deſerves.——Good Heaven! If I had ſuch a Husband——

Mrs. Strict. You would be juſt as unhappy as I am.

Clar. Butt come now——Confeſs——Do not you long to be a Widow?

Mrs. Strict. Would I were any thing but what I am!

Clar. Then go the neareſt Way about it. I'd break that ſtout Heart of his in leſs than a Fortnight. I'd make him know——

Mrs. Strict. Pray be ſilent. You know my Reſolution.

Clar. I know you have no Reſolution.

Mrs. Strict. You are a mad Creature, but I forgive you.

Clar. It is all meant kindly, I aſſure you. But ſince you won't be perſuaded to your Good; I will think of making you eaſy in your Submiſſion as ſoon as ever I can. I dare ſay, I may have the ſame Lodging I had laſt Year. I can know immediately——I ſee my Chair: And ſo Ladies both, adieu! [*Exit* Clarinda.

Jacin. Come, Mrs. *Strictland*, we ſhall but juſt have time to get home before Mr. *Bellamy* comes.

Mrs. Strict. Let us return then to our common Priſon. You muſt forgive my Ill-nature, *Jacintha*, if I almoſt wiſh Mr *Strictland* may refuſe to join your Hand where your Heart is given.

Jacin. Lord! Madam, what do you mean?

Mrs Strict. Self-intereſt only, Child! Methinks your Company in the Country would ſoften all my Sorrows, and I could bear them patiently.

Re-enter

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Re-enter Clarinda.

Clar. Dear Mrs. *Strictland*——I am ſo confus'd, and ſo out of Breath——

Mrs. Strict. Why, what is the Matter?

Jacin. I proteſt you fright me.

Clar. Oh! I have no time to recover myſelf. I am ſo frighten'd and ſo pleas'd. In ſhort then, the dear Man is here.

Mrs. Strict. Here——Lord——Where?

Clar. I met him this Inſtant. I ſaw him at a Diſtance, turn'd ſhort; and ran hither directly. Let us go home. I tell you, he follows me.

Mrs. Strict. Why, had you not better ſtay, and let him ſpeak to you?

Clar. Ay!——But then——He won't know where I live, without my telling him.

Mrs. Strict. Come, then. Ha! ha! ha!

Jacin. Ah! Poor *Clarinda!* — *Allons donc.* [*Exeunt.*

Enter Frankly.

Frank. Sure that muſt be ſhe! Her ſhape and eaſy Air cannot be ſo exactly copied by another.——Now, you young Rogue, *Cupid*, guide me directly to her, as you would the ſureſt Arrow in your Quiver. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Changes to the Street before Mr. Strictland's *Door.*

Re-enter Clarinda, Jacintha, *and Mrs.* Strictland.

Clar. Lord!——Dear *Jacintha*——for Heaven's ſake make haſte. He'll overtake us before we get in.

Jacin. Overtake us? Why, he is not in Sight.

Clar. Is not he? Ha! ſure I have not dropt my Twee—[I would not have him loſe Sight of me neither. [*Aſide.*

Mrs. Strict. Here he is——

Clar. In——In——In then.

Jacin. [*Laughing.*] What, without your Twee?

Clar.

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Clar. Pshah! I have lost nothing.—In——I'll follow you. [*Exeunt into the House.* Clarinda *last.*

Enter Frankly.

Frank. It is impossible I should be deceiv'd: My Eyes, and the quick Pulses at my Heart assure me it is she. Ha! 'tis she, by Heaven! and the Door left open too——A fair Invitation, by all the Rules of Love—— [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Changes to an Apartment in Mr. Strickland's *House.*

Enter Clarinda, Frankly *following her.*

Frank. I hope, Madam, you will excuse the Boldness of this Intrusion, since it is owing to your own Behaviour that I am forc'd to it.

Clar. To my Behaviour, Sir?

Frank. You cannot but remember me at *Bath*, Madam, where I so lately had the Favour of your Hand——

Clar. I do remember, Sir; but I little expected any wrong Interpretation of my Behaviour from one, who had so much the Appearance of a Gentleman.

Frank. What I saw of your Behaviour was so just, it would admit of no Misinterpretation. I only fear'd, whatever Reason you had to conceal your Name from me at *Bath*, you might have the same to do it now; and tho' my Happiness was so nearly concern'd, I rather chose to venture thus abruptly after you, than be impertinently inquisitive.

Clar. Sir, there seems to be so much Civility in your Rudeness, that I can easily forgive it; tho' I don't see how your Happiness is at all concern'd.

Frank. No, Madam! I believe you are the only Lady, who could, with the Qualifications you are Mistress of, be insensible of the Power they give you over the Happiness of our Sex.

Clar. How vain should we Women be, if you Gentlemen were but wise! If you did not all of you say the same

same things to every Woman, we should certainly be foolish enough to believe some of you were in earnest.

Frank. Could you have the least Sense of what I feel whilst I am speaking, you would know me to be in earnest, and what I say to be the Dictates of a Heart that admires you; may I not say that——

Clar. Sir, this is carrying the——

Frank. When I danced with you at *Bath*, I was charm'd with your whole Behaviour, and felt the same tender Admiration: But my Hope of seeing you afterwards kept in my Passion 'till a more proper Time should offer. You cannot therefore blame me now, if, after having lost you once, I do not suffer an inexcusable Modesty to prevent my making use of this second Opportunity.

Clar. This Behaviour, Sir, is so different from the Gaiety of your Conversation then, that I am at a loss how to answer you.

Frank. There is nothing, Madam, which could take off from the Gaiety with which your Presence inspires every Heart, but the Fear of losing you. How can I be otherwise than sad I am, when I know not, but you may leave *London* as abruptly as you did *Bath*?

Enter Lucetta.

Luce. Madam, the Tea is ready, and my Mistress waits for you.

Clar. Very well, I come—— [*Exit* Lucetta.] You see, Sir, I am call'd away; but I hope you will excuse it, when I leave you with an Assurance, that the Business which brings me to Town will keep me here some time.

Frank. How generous it is in you thus to ease the Heart, that knew not how to ask for such a Favour—I fear to offend—But this House, I suppose, is yours.

Clar. You will hear of me, if not find me here.

Frank. I then take my Leave. [*Exit.*

Clar. I'm undone!——He has me!

Enter Mrs. Strictland.

Mrs. Strict. Well! How do you find yourself?

Clar.

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Clar. I do find — that if he goes on, as he has begun, I shall certainly have him without giving him the least Uneasiness.

Mrs. Strict. A very terrible Prospect, indeed!

Clar. But I must tease him a little. — Where is *Jacintha?* How will she laugh at me, if I become a Pupil of hers, and learn to give Ease? No! positively I shall never do it.

Mrs. Strict. Poor *Jacintha* has met with what I fear'd, from Mr. *Strictland's* Temper! — An utter Denial. I know not why, but he really grows more and more ill-natur'd.

Clar. Well! now do I heartily wish my Affairs were in his Power a little, that I might have a few Difficulties to surmount. — I love Difficulties — and yet, I don't know — it is as well as it is.

Mrs. Strict. Ha, ha, ha! Come, the Tea waits.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Mr. Strictland.

Mr. Strict. These Doings in my House distract me! I met a fine Gentleman — when I inquir'd who he was; why, he came to *Clarinda*. I met a Footman too, and he came to *Clarinda*. I shall not be easy till she is decamp'd. My Wife had the Character of a virtuous Woman — and they have not been long acquainted. But then they were by themselves at *Bath!* That hurts — that hurts. — They must be watch'd — they must — I know them. I know all their Wiles; and the best of them are but Hypocrites. Ha! — [*Lucetta passes over the Stage.*] Suppose I bribe the Maid — She is of their Council — The Manager of their Secrets — It shall be so — Money will do it, and I shall know all that passes. *Lucetta!*

Lucet. Sir.

Mr. Strict. *Lucetta!*

Re-enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Sir. If he should suspect, and search me now, I'm undone. [*Aside.*

Mr.

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Mr. Strict. She is a ſly Girl, and may be ſerviceable. [*Aſide.*

Lucetta, you are a good Girl, and have an honeſt Face. I like it. It looks as if it carried no Deceit in it—[Yet if ſhe ſhould be falſe, ſhe can do me moſt harm. [*Aſide.*

Lucet. Pray, Sir, ſpeak out.

Mr. Strict. [*Aſide.*] No! ſhe is a Woman, and it is the higheſt Imprudence to truſt her.

Lucet. I am not able to underſtand you.

Mr. Strict. I am glad of it. I would not have you underſtand me.

Lucet. Then what did you call me for? [If he ſhould be in Love with my Face, it would be rare Sport. [*Aſide.*

Mr. Strict. [*Aſide.*] *Teſter*, ay, *Teſter* is the proper Perſon—*Lucetta*, tell *Teſter* I want him.

Lucet. Yes, Sir. —[*Aſide.*] Mighty odd, this! It gives me time however to ſend *Buckle* with this Letter to his Maſter. [*Exit* Lucetta.

Mr. Strict. Could I but be once well ſatisfied that my Wife had really ſinniſh'd me, I believe I ſhould be as quiet, as if I were ſure of the contrary.—But whilſt I am in doubt, I am miſerable.

Enter Teſter.

Teſter. Does your Honour pleaſe to want me?

Mr. Strict. Ay, *Teſter*.——I need not fear. The Honeſty of his Service and the Goodneſs of his Look make me ſecure. I will truſt him. [*Aſide.*]—*Teſter*, I think I have been a tolerable good Maſter to you.

Teſter. Yes, Sir,—very tolerable.

Mr. Strict. [*Aſide.*] I like his Simplicity well. It promiſes Honeſty—I have a Secret, *Teſter*, to impart to you——A thing of the greateſt Importance. Look upon me, and don't ſtand picking your Fingers.

Teſter. Yes, Sir.—No, Sir.

Mr. Strict. But will not his Simplicity expoſe him the more to *Lucetta*'s Cunning? Yes, yes! ſhe will worm the Secret out of him. I had better truſt her with it at once.——So——I will. [*Aſide.*] *Teſter*, go, ſend *Lucetta* hither.

Teſter.

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Teſter. Yes, Sir.——Here ſhe is.

Re-enter Lucetta.

Lucetta, my Maſter wants you.

Mr. Strict. Get you down, *Teſter.*

Teſter. Yes, Sir. [*Exit* Teſter.

Lucet. If you want me, Sir, I beg you would make haſte, for I have a thouſand things to do.

Mr. Strict. Well! well! What I have to ſay will not take up much time, could I but perſuade you to be honeſt.

Lucet. Why, Sir, I hope you don't ſuſpect my Honeſty?

Mr. Strict. Well! well! I believe you honeſt.

[*Shuts the Door.*

Lucet. What can be at the bottom of all this? [*Aſide.*

Mr. Strict. So! We cannot be too private. Come hither, Huſſy! nearer yet.

Lucet. Laud! Sir! You are not going to be rude. I vow, I will call out.

Mr. Strict. Hold your Tongue. Does the Baggage laugh at me? [*Aſide.*] She does——She mocks me, and will reveal it to my Wife; and her Inſolence upon it will be more inſupportable to me than Cuckoldom itſelf. I have not Leiſure now, *Lucetta*——Some other time——Huſh! Did not the Bell ring? Yes, yes; my Wife wants you. Go, go, go to her. [*Puſhes her out.*] There is no Hell on Earth like being a Slave to Suſpicion. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

The PIAZZA, Covent-Garden.

Enter Bellamy *and* Jack Meggot.

Bella. Nay, nay, I would not put your Family into any Confuſion.

Jack Meg. None in Life, my Dear, I aſſure you. I will go and order every thing this Inſtant for her Reception.

Bella. You are too obliging, Sir; but you need not be in this hurry, for I am in no Certainty when I ſhall trouble

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trouble you. I only know that my *Jacintha* has taken such a Resolution.

Jack Meg. Therefore we should be prepar'd; for when once a Lady has such a Resolution in her Head, she is upon the rack till she executes it. Foregad! Mr. *Bellamy*, this must be a Girl of Fire.

Enter Frankly.

Frank. Buxom and lively as the bounding Doe.—— Fair as Painting can express, or youthful Poets fancy when they Love. Tol de rol, lol! [*Singing and Dancing.*

Bella. Who is this you talk thus rapturously of?

Frank. Who should it be, but——I shall know her Name to Morrow. [*Sings and Dances.*

Jack Meg. What is the matter, ho! Is the Man mad?

Frank. Even so, Gentlemen, as mad as Love and Joy can make me.

Bella. But inform us whence this Joy proceeds.

Frank. Joy! Joy! my Lads! She's found! My *Peridot*! My Charmer!

Jack Meg. Egad! her Charms have bewitch'd that Man I think.——But who is she?

Bella. Come, come, tell us, who is this Wonder?

Frank. But will you say nothing?

Bella. Nothing, as I live.

Frank. Nor you?

Jack Meg. I'll be as silent as the Grave——

Frank. With a Tombstone upon it, to tell every one whose Dust it carries.

Jack Meg. I'll be as secret as a debauch'd Prude——

Frank. Whose Sanctity every one suspects. *Jack, Jack*, 'tis not in thy Nature. Keeping a Secret is worse to thee, than keeping thy Accounts. But to leave fooling, listen to me, both; that I may whisper it into your Ears, that Echo may not catch the sinking Sound——I cannot tell who she is, 'faith——Tol de rol, lol——

Jack Meg. Mad! mad! very mad!

Frank. All I know of her is, that she is a charming Woman, and has given me liberty to visit her again.—— *Bellamy*, 'tis she, the lovely she. [*Aside.*

Bella.

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Bella. So I did suppose. [*To* Frankly.

Jack Meg. Poor *Charles!* For Heaven's sake, Mr. *Bellamy*, persuade him home to his Chamber——[Whilst I prepare every thing for you at home. Adieu—[*Aside, to Bellamy.*] B'ye *Charles!* ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Frank. Oh, Love! thou art a Gift worthy of a God indeed! Dear *Bellamy*, nothing now could add to my Pleasure, but to see my Friend as deep in Love as I am.

Bella. I shew my Heart is capable of Love, by the Friendship it bears to you.

Frank. The Light of Friendship looks but dim before the brighter Flame of Love. Love is the Spring of Chearfulness and Joy. Why, how dull and phlegmatick do you shew to me now? Whilst I am all Life; light as feather'd *Mercury.*——You dull, and cold as Earth and Water; I light and warm as Air and Fire.——These are the only Elements in Love's World! Why, *Bellamy*, for Shame! get thee a Mistress, and be sociable.

Bella. Frankly, I am now going to——

Frank. Why that Face now? Your humble Servant, Sir. My Flood of Joy shall not be stopt by your melancholy Fits, I assure you. [*Going.*]

Bella. Stay, *Frankly*, I beg you stay. What would you say now, if I really were in Love?

Frank. Why, faith, thou hast such romantick Notions of Sense and Honour, that I know not what to say.

Bella. To confess the Truth then, I am in Love.

Frank. And do you confess it as if it were a Sin? Proclaim it aloud. Glory in it. Boast of it as your greatest Virtue. Swear it with a Lover's Oath, and I will believe you.

Bella. Why then, by the bright Eyes of her I love——

Frank. Well said!

Bella. By all that's tender, amiable, and soft in Woman——

Frank. Brave!

Bella. I swear, I am as true an *Enamorato* as ever tagg'd a Rhyme.

Frank. And art thou then thoroughly in Love? Come to my Arms, thou dear Companion of my Joys——

[*They embrace,*

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Enter Ranger.

Rang. Why — Hey! —— Is there never a Wench to be got for Love or Money?

Bella. Pſhah! *Ranger* here!

Rang. Yes, *Ranger* is here, and perhaps does not come ſo impertinently as you may imagine. Faith! I think I have the knack of finding out Secrets. Nay, never look ſo queer —— Here is a Letter, Mr. *Bellamy*, that ſeems to promiſe you better Diverſion than your hugging one another.

Bella. What do you mean?

Rang. Do you deal much in theſe Paper Tokens?

Bella. Oh! the dear kind Creature! It is from her herſelf. [*To* Frankly.

Rang. What, is it a Pair of lac'd Shoes ſhe wants? Or have the Boys broke her Windows?

Bella. Hold your prophane Tongue!

Frank. Nay, prithee, *Bellamy*, don't keep it to yourſelf, as if her whole Affections were contain'd in thoſe few Lines.

Rang. Prithee, let him alone to his ſilent Raptures. But it is, as I always ſaid —— Your grave Men ever are the greateſt Whoremaſters.

Bella. I cannot be diſoblig'd now, ſay what you will. But how came this into your Hands?

Rang. Your Servant *Buckle* and I chang'd Commiſſions. He went on my Errand, and I came on his.

Bella. S'death! I want him this very Inſtant.

Rang. He will be here preſently! But I demand to know what I have brought you?

Frank. Ay! ay! Out with it! You know we never blab, and may be of Service.

Bella. Twelve o' Clock! oh! the dear Hour.

Rang. Why, it is a pretty convenient Time, indeed.

Bella. By all that's happy, ſhe promiſes in this Letter here — to leave her Guardian this very Night —— and run away with me.

Rang. How is this?

Bella. Nay, I know not how myſelf — ſhe ſays at the Bottom — *Your Servant has full Inſtructions from* Lucetta, *how*

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how to equip me for my Expedition — I will not truſt myſelf home with you to night, becauſe I know it is inconvenient; therefore I beg you wou'd procure me a Lodging; it is no matter how far off my Guardian's—— *Yours,* Jacintha.

Rang. Carry her to a Bagnio, and there you may lodge with her.

Frank. Why, this muſt be a Girl of Spirit, Faith!

Bella. And Beauty equal to her Sprightlineſs. I love her, and ſhe loves me——She has thirty Thouſand to her Fortune.

Rang. The Devil ſhe has!

Bella. And never plays at Cards.

Rang. Nor does any one thing like any other Woman, I ſuppoſe.

Frank. Not ſo, I hope, neither.

Bella. Oh! *Frankly, Ranger,* I never felt ſuch Eaſe before. The Secret's out, and you don't laugh at me.

Frank. Laugh at thee?—for loving a Woman of thirty thouſand Pound? Thou art a moſt unaccountable Fellow.

Rang. How the Devil could he work her up to this? I never could have had the Face to have done it. But—— I know not how——There is a Degree of Aſſurance in you modeſt Gentlemen, which we impudent Fellows never can come up to——

Bella. Oh! your Servant, good Sir. You ſhould not abuſe me now, *Ranger,* but do all you can to aſſiſt me.

Rang. Why, look ye, *Bellamy,* I am a damnable unlucky Fellow——and ſo will have nothing to do in this Affair. I'll take care to be out of the way, ſo as to do you no harm. That is all I can anſwer for: and ſo—— Succeſs attend you. [*Going.*] I cannot leave you quite to yourſelf neither, for if this ſhould prove a Round-houſe Affair, as I make no doubt it will, I believe I may have more Intereſt there than you; and ſo, Sir, you may hear of me at—— [*Whiſpers.*]

Bella. For ſhame, *Ranger!* The moſt noted Gaming-houſe in Town.

Rang. Forgive me this once, my Boy. I muſt go, Faith, to pay a Debt of Honour to ſome of the greateſt Raſcals in the Nation. [*Exit.*

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Frank. But where do you design to lodge her?

Bella. At Mr. *Meggot's*—He is already gone to prepare for her Reception.

Frank. The properest Place in the World. His Aunts will entertain her with Honour.

Bella. And the Newness of our Acquaintance will prevent its being suspected.—*Frankly*, give me your Hand. This is a very critical Time——

Frank. Pha! none of your musty Reflexions now! When a Man is in Love to the very Brink of Matrimony, what the Devil has he to do with *Plutarch* and *Seneca*? Here is your Servant with a Face full of Business—I'll leave you together—I shall be at the *King's Arms*, where, if you want my Assistance, you may find me. [*Exit.*

Enter Buckle.

Bella. So—*Buckle*—you seem to have your Hands full.

Buck. Not fuller than my Head, Sir, I promise you. You have had your Letter, I hope.

Bella. Yes, and in it she refers me to you for my Instructions.

Buck. Why, the Affair stands thus—As Mr. *Strictland* sees the Doors lock'd and barr'd every Night himself, and takes the Keys up with him; it is impossible for us to escape any way but thro' the Window: for which Purpose I have a Ladder of Ropes.

Bella. Good——

Buck. And because a Hoop, as the Ladies wear them now, is not the most decent Dress to come down a Ladder in—— I have in this other Bundle a Suit of Boys Clothes, which I believe will fit her. At least, it will serve the Time she will want it——You will soon be for pulling it off, I suppose.

Bella. Why, you are in Spirits, you Rogue.

Buck. These I am now to convey to *Lucetta*——Have you any thing to say, Sir?

Bella. Nothing, but that I will not fail at the Hour appointed—Bring me word to Mr. *Meggot's* how you go on. Succeed in this, and it shall make your Fortune. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

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ACT III. SCENE I.

The Street before Mr. Strickland's *Houſe.*

Enter Bellamy *in a Chairman's Coat.*

Bella. HOW tedioufly have the Minutes paſt theſe laſt few Hours! and the envious Rogues will ſay, no Lightning quicker, when we would have them ſtay.——Hold! let me not miſtake.—This is the Houſe. [*Pulls at the Door.*] By Heaven! it is not yet the Hour—I hear ſomebody coming. The Moon's ſo bright—I had better not be here, 'till the happy Inſtant comes. [*Exit.*

Enter Frankly.

Frank. Wine is no Antidote to Love, but rather feeds the Flame. Now am I ſuch an amorous Puppy, that I cannot walk ſtraight Home, but muſt come out of my way to take a View of my Queen's Palace by Moon-light.—Ay, here ſtands the Temple where my Goddeſs is adored! the Door opens! [*Retires.*

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. [*Under the Window.*] Madam, Madam, hiſt! Madam!——How ſhall I make her hear?——

Jacintha *in Boys Clothes at the Window.*

Jacin. Who is there!—What's the Matter?——

Lucet. It is I, Madam. You muſt not pretend to ſtir 'till I give the Word—You'll be diſcover'd if you do.—

Frank. [*Aſide.*] What do I ſee! a Man. My Heart miſgives me!——

Lucet. My Maſter is below ſitting up for Mrs. *Clarinda.* He raves as if he was mad about her being out ſo late.

Frank. [*Aſide.*] Here is ſome Intrigue, or other. I muſt ſee more of this, before I give further way to Love.

Lucet. One Minute he is in the Street——the next he is in the Kitchen. Now he will lock her out, and then he'll wait himſelf, and ſee what Figure ſhe makes when ſhe vouchſafes to venture home.

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Jacin. I long to have it over. Get me but once out of this Houſe!

Frank. [*Aſide*] Cowardly Raſcal! Would I were in his Place.

Lucet. If I can but fix him any where, I can let you out myſelf,—You have the Ladder ready in Caſe of Neceſſity.

Jacin. Yes! yes! [*Exit* Lucetta.

Frank. [*Aſide.*] The Ladder! This muſt lead to ſome Diſcovery. I ſhall watch you, my young Gentleman. I ſhall.

Enter Clarinda, *and Servant.*

Clar. This Whisk is a moſt enticing Devil. I am afraid I am too late for Mr. *Strickland*'s ſober Hours.

Jacin. Ha! I hear a Noiſe!

Clar. No! I ſee a Light in *Jacintha*'s Window. You may go home. [*Giving the Servant Money.*] I am ſafe.

Jacin. Sure it muſt be he! Mr. *Bellamy.*—Sir!

Frank. [*Aſide.*] Does not he call to me?

Clar. [*Aſide.*] Ha! who's that? I am frighted out of my Wits.—A Man!—

Jacin. Is it you?

Frank. Yes! yes! 'tis I! 'tis I!

Jacin. Liſten at the Door.

Frank. I will, 'tis open——There is no Noiſe—All's quiet.

Clar. Sure it is my Spark—and talking to *Jacintha.* [*Aſide.*

Frank. You may come down the Ladder—quick.

Jacin. Catch it then; and hold it.

Frank. I have it. Now I ſhall ſee what ſort of Mettle my young Spark is made of. [*Aſide.*

Clar. With a Ladder too! I'll aſſure you. But I muſt ſee the end of it. [*Aſide.*

Jacin. Hark! did not ſomebody ſpeak!

Frank. No! no! Be not fearful——'Sdeath! we are diſcover'd. [Frankly *and* Clarinda *retire.*

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Hiſt! hiſt! are you ready?

Jacin. Yes, may I venture?

Lucet.

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Lucet. Now is your Time. He is in high Conference with his Privy-Counſellor Mr. *Teſter.* You may come down the back Stairs, and I'll let you out. [*Exit* Lucetta.

Jacin. I will, I will, and am heartily glad of it. [*Exit* Jacintha.

Frank. [*Advancing.*] May be ſo—But you and I ſhall have a few Words before you get off ſo cleanly.

Clar. [*Advancing.*] How lucky it was I came home at this Inſtant. I ſhall ſpoil his Sport, I believe. Do you know me, Sir?

Frank. I am amaz'd! You here! This was unexpected indeed!

Clar. Why, I believe I do come a little unexpectedly; but I ſhall amaze you more—I know the whole Courſe of your Amour; all the Proceſs of your mighty Paſſion from its firſt Riſe——

Frank. What is all this!——

Clar. To the very Concluſion, which you vainly hope to effect this Night.

Frank. By Heaven, Madam, I know not what you mean. I came hither purely to contemplate on your Beauties.

Clar. Any Beauties, Sir, I find will ſerve your Turn. Did I not hear you talk to her at the Window?

Frank. Her!

Clar. Bluſh, bluſh for Shame; but be aſſur'd you have ſeen the laſt both of *Jacintha* and me. [*Exit.*

Frank. Jacintha! Hear me, Madam——She is gone. This muſt certainly be *Bellamy*'s Miſtreſs, and I have fairly ruin'd all his Scheme. This it is to be in Luck.

Enter Bellamy, *behind.*

Bella. Ha! A Man under the Window!

Frank. No, here ſhe comes, and I may convey her to him.

Enter Jacintha, *and runs to* Frrankly.

Jacin. I have at laſt got to you: Let's haſte away—Oh!

Frank. Be not frighten'd, Lady.

Jacin. Oh! I am abus'd, betray'd!

Bella. Betray'd! *Frankly!*

Frank. Bellamy!

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Bella. I can ſcarce believe it, tho' I ſee it. Draw—

Frank. Hear me, *Bellamy*——Lady.

Jacin. Stay——do not fight.

Frank. I am innocent; it is all a Miſtake.

Jacin. For my Sake, be quiet—We ſhall be diſcover'd. The Family is alarm'd.

Bella. You are obey'd—Mr. *Frankly*, there is but one Way——

Frank. I underſtand you. Any time but now. You will certainly be diſcover'd. To-morrow——at your Chambers.——

Bella. 'Till then, farewel. [*Exeunt* Bella. *and* Jacin.

Frank. Then when he is cool, I may be heard; and the real, tho' ſuſpicious Account of this Matter may be believ'd. Yet amidſt all this Perplexity, it pleaſes me to find my fair *incognita* is jealous of my Love.

Mr. Strict. [*Within.*] Where's *Lucetta?* Search every Place.

Frank. Hark! the Cry is up——I muſt be gone.

[*Exit* Frankly.

Enter Mr. Strictland, Teſter, *and Servants.*

Mr. Strict. She's gone! She's loſt! I am cheated! Purſue her! Seek her!

Teſter. Sir, all her Clothes are in her Chamber.

Serv. Sir, Mrs. *Clarinda* ſaid ſhe was in Boys Clothes.

Mr. Strict. Ay, ay! I know it——*Bellamy* has her——Come along——Purſue her. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Ranger.

Rang. Hark!——Was not the Noiſe this Way——No——There is no Game ſtirring. This ſame Goddeſs, *Diana*, ſhines ſo bright with her Chaſtity, that egad! I believe the Wenches are aſham'd to look her in the Face. Now am I in an admirable Mood for a Frolick! I have Wine in my Head, and Money in my Pocket, and ſo am furniſh'd out for the Cannonading any Counteſs in Chriſtendom! Ha! What have we here! a Ladder! This cannot be placed here for nothing—and a Window open!——Is it Love, or Miſchief now that is going on within?—I care not which—I am in a right Cue for either.

Up

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Up I go——Stay——Do I not run a greater Chance of spoiling Sport than I do of making any? That I hate as much as I love the other—There can be no harm in seeing how the Land lies——I'll up. [*Goes up softly.*]——All is hush!——Ha! a Light! and a Woman, by all that's lucky, neither old, nor crooked——I'll in——Ha! she is gone again! I will after her. [*Gets in at the Window.*] And for fear of the Squawls of Virtue, and the Pursuit of the Family, I will make sure of the Ladder. Now, Fortune be my Guide. [*Exit with the Ladder.*

SCENE II.

Mrs. Strictland's *Dressing-Room.*

Enter Mrs. Strictland, *follow'd by* Lucetta.

Mrs. Strict. Well! I am in great Hopes she will escape.

Lucet. Never fear, Madam. The Lovers have the start of him, and I warrant, they keep it.

Mrs. Strict. Were Mr. *Strictland* ever to suspect my being privy to her Flight, I know not what might be the Consequence.

Lucet. Then you had better be undressing——He may return immediately.

[*As she is sitting down to the Toilet,* Ranger *enters behind.*

Rang. Young and beautiful.—— [*Aside.*

Lucet. I have watch'd him pretty narrowly of late, and never once suspected till this Morning——

Mrs. Strict. And who gave you Authority to watch his Actions, or pry into his Secrets?

Lucet. I hope, Madam, you are not angry: I thought it might have been of Service to you to know my Master was jealous.

Rang. And her Husband jealous! If she does but send away the Maid, I am happy.

Mrs. Strict. [*Angrily.*] Leave me!

Lucet. This it is to meddle with other Peoples Affairs.

[*Exit in Anger.*

Rang. What a lucky Dog I am! I never made a Gentleman a Cuckold before. Now, Impudence, assist me.

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Mrs. Strict. [*Rising.*] Provoking! I am sure I never have deserv'd it of him.

Rang. Oh! Cuckold him by all means, Madam, I am your Man! [*She shrieks.*] Oh, fy, Madam! If you squawl so cursedly, you will be discover'd.

Mrs Strict. Discover'd! What mean you, Sir? Do you come to abuse me?

Rang. I'll do my Endeavours, Madam: You can have no more.

Mrs. Strict. Whence came you? How got you here?

Rang. Dear Madam, so long as I am here, what signifies how I got here, or whence I came? But that I may satisfy your Curiosity. First, as to your Whence came you? I answer, out of the Street: And to your How got you here? I say, in at the Window. It stood so invitingly open, it was irresistible. But, Madam—You was going to undress. I beg I may not incommode you.

Mrs. Strict. This is the most consummate Piece of Impudence!———

Rang. For Heaven's sake, have one Drop of Pity for a poor young Fellow, who long has lov'd you.

Mrs. Strict. What would the Fellow have?

Rang. Your Husband's Usage will excuse you to the World.

Mrs. Strict. I cannot bear this Insolence! Help! help!

Rang. Oh! hold that clamorous Tongue! Madam, speak one Word more, and I am gone, positively gone?

Mrs. Strict. Gone! So I would have you.

Rang. Lord! Madam, you are so hasty.

Mrs. Strict. Shall I not speak, when a Thief, a Robber, breaks into my House at Midnight? Help! help!

Rang. Ha! no one hears. Now, *Cupid*, assist me! Look ye, Madam, I never could make fine Speeches, and cringe, and bow, and fawn, and flatter, and lye. I have said more to you already, than I ever said to a Woman in such Circumstances in all my Life. But since I find you will yield to no Persuasion to your Good—I will gently force you to be grateful. [*Throws down his Hat, and seizes her.*] Come, come! unbend that Brow, and look more kindly on me!

Mrs. Strict. For Shame, Sir—Thus on my Knees let me beg for Mercy. [*Kneeling.*

Rang.

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Rang. And thus, on mine, let me beg the ſame.
[*He kneels, catches, and kiſſes her.*

Mr. Strict. [*Within.*] Take away her Sword! She'll hurt herſelf!

Mrs. Strict. Oh! Heavens! that is my Husband's Voice!

Rang. [*Riſing.*] The Devil it is!

Mr. Strict. [*Within.*] Take away her Sword, I ſay; and then I can cloſe with her.

Mrs. Strict. He is upon the Stairs, now coming up. I am undone, if he ſees you.

Rang. Pox on him! I muſt decamp then. Which Way?

Mrs. Strict. Thro' this Paſſage into the next Chamber.

Rang. And ſo into the Street. With all my Heart. You may be perfectly eaſy, Madam. Mum's the Word. I never blab.— [*Aſide*] I ſhall not leave off ſo, but wait till the laſt Moment. [*Exit* Ranger.

Mrs. Strict. So, he is gone? What could I have ſaid, if he had been diſcover'd!

Enter Mr. Strictland, *driving in* Jacintha, Lucetta *following.*

Mr. Strict. Once more, my pretty maſculine Madam, you are welcome home. And I hope to keep you ſomewhat cloſer than I have done: for to-morrow Morning, eight o' Clock, is the lateſt Hour you ſhall ſtay in this lewd Town.

Jacin. Oh, Sir! when once a Girl is equip'd with a hearty Reſolution, it is not your Worſhip's Sagacity, nor the great Chain at your Gate can hinder her from doing what ſhe has a Mind.

Mr. Strict. Oh, Lord! Lord! How this Love improves a young Lady's Modeſty!

Jacin. Am I to blame to ſeek for Happineſs any where, when you are reſolv'd to make me miſerable here!

Mr. Strict. I have this Night prevented your making yourſelf ſo; and will endeavour to do it for the future. I have you ſafe now, and the Devil ſhall not get you out of my Clutches again. I have lock'd the Doors and barr'd them, I warrant you. So, here— [*Giving her a Candle.*]

Troop

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Troop to your Chamber, and to Bed, whilſt you are well. Go—[*He treads on* Ranger's *Hat.*] What's here? a Hat! A Man's Hat in my Wife's Dreſſing-Room!

[*Looking at the Hat.*

Mrs. Strict. [*Aſide.*] What ſhall I do?

Mr. Strict. [*Taking up the Hat and looking at Mrs.* Strictland.] Ha! By Hell! I ſee 'tis true.

Mrs. Strict. My Fears confound me. I dare not tell the Truth, and know not how to frame a Lye!

Mr. Strict. Mrs. *Strictland!* Mrs. *Strictland!* How came this Hat into your Chamber!

Lucet. [*Aſide.*] Are you that way diſpos'd, my fine Lady, and will not truſt me?

Mr. Strict. Speak, Wretch, ſpeak.———

Jacin. I could not have ſuſpected this. [*Aſide.*

Mr. Strict. Why doſt thou not ſpeak?

Mrs. Strict. Sir———

Mr. Strict. Guilt—'tis Guilt that ties your Tongue!

Lucet. I muſt bring her off, however.—No Chamber-maid can help it.——— [*Aſide.*

Mr. Strict. My Fears are juſt, and I am miſerable—Thou worſt of Women!

Mrs. Strict. I know my Innocence, and can bear this no longer.

Mr. Strict. I know you are falſe,—and 'tis I who will bear my Injuries no longer. [*Both walk about in a Paſſion.*

Lucet. [*To* Jacintha *aſide.*] Is not the Hat yours? Own it, Madam. [*Takes away* Jacintha's *Hat, and Exit.*

Mrs Strict. What Ground? what Cauſe have you for Jealouſy, when you yourſelf can witneſs, your leaving me was accidental; your Return uncertain; and expected even ſooner than it happen'd? The Abuſe is groſs and palpable.

Mr. Strict. Why, this is true!

Mrs. Strict. Indeed, *Jacintha,* I am innocent.

Mr. Strict. And yet this Hat muſt belong to ſomebody.

Jacin. Dear Mrs. *Strictland,* be not concern'd.——When he has diverted himſelf a little longer with it——

Mr. Strict. Ha!———

Jacin. I ſuppoſe he will give me my Hat again?

Mr. Strict. Your Hat?

Jacin.

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Jacin. Yes, my Hat. You brush'd it from my Side yourself, and then trod upon it; whether on purpose to abuse this Lady, or no, you best know yourself.

Mr. Strict. It cannot be—It's all a Lye.

Jacin. Believe so still—with all my Heart—But the Hat is mine. [*Snatches it, and puts it on.*

Mrs Strict. Why did she look so?

Jacin. Your Violence of Temper is too much for her. You use her Ill, and then suspect her for that Confusion which you yourself occasion.

Mr. Strict. Why did not you set me right at first?

Jacin. Your hard Usage of me, Sir, is a sufficient Reason why I should not be much concern'd to undeceive you at all. 'Tis for your Lady's sake, I do it now; who deserves much better of you than to be thus expos'd for every slight Suspicion. See where she sits—Go to her.

Mrs. Strict. [*Rising.*] Indeed, Mr. *Strictland*, I have a Soul as much above———

Mr. Strict. Whew! now you have both found your Tongues, and I must bear their eternal Rattle!

Jacin. For Shame! Sir, Go to her, and——

Mr. Strict. Well! well! what shall I say? I forgive—all is over. I, I, I forgive!

Mrs. Strict. Forgive? What do you mean?

Jacin. Forgive her? is that all? Consider, Sir—

Mr. Strict. Hold—hold your confounded Tongues, and I'll do any thing. I'll ask Pardon—or forgive—or any thing. Good now, be quiet—I ask your Pardon—there—— [*Kisses her.*] For you, Madam——I am infinitely oblig'd to you, and I could find in my Heart to make you a Return in kind, by marrying you to a Beggar,—but I have more Conscience. Come, come; to your Chamber.—Here, take this Candle———

Enter Lucetta *pertly.*

Lucet. Sir, if you please, I will light my young Lady to Bed.

Mr. Strict. No! no! no such thing, good Madam. She shall have nothing but her Pillow to consult this Night, I assure you—So, in, in. [*The Ladies take leave.*] [*Exit* Jacintha.] Good Night, kind Madam.

Lucet.

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Lucet. Pox of the jealous Fool! We might both have escap'd out of the Window purely. [*Aside.*

Mr. Strict. Go, get you down; and, do you hear? order the Coach to be ready in the Morning at Eight exactly. [*Exit* Lucetta.] So she is safe till to-morrow, and then for the Country; and when she is there, I can manage as I think fit.

Mrs. Strict. Dear Mr. *Strictland.*———

Mr. Strict. I am not in a Humour, Mrs. *Strictland*, fit to talk with you.—Go to Bed,—I will endeavour to get the better of my Temper, if I can——I'll follow you. [*Exit Mrs.* Strictland.] How despicable have I made myself! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Another CHAMBER.

Enter Ranger.

Rang. All seems hush'd again, and I may venture out, I may as well sneak off whilst I am in a whole Skin. And shall so much Love and Claret as I am in possession of, only lull me to Sleep, when it might so much better keep me waking? Forbid it, Fortune; and forbid it, Love. This is a Chamber, perhaps of some bewitching Female, and I may yet be happy. Ha! a Light! The Door opens, A Boy! Pox on him. [*He retires.*]

Enter Jacintha, *with a Candle.*

Jacin. I have been listening at the Door; and from their Silence, I conclude they are peaceably gone to Bed together.

Rang. [*Aside.*] A pretty Boy, Faith! He seems uneasy.

Jacin. [*Sitting down.*] What an unlucky Night has this proved to me! Every Circumstance has fall'n out unhappily.

Rang. He talks aloud. I'll listen. [*Aside.*

Jacin. But what most amazes me is, that *Clarinda* should betray me!

Rang. Clarinda? she must be a Woman! well! what of her? [*Aside.*

Jacin.

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Jacin. My Guardian elſe would never have ſuſpected my Diſguiſe.

Rang. [*Aſide.*] Diſguiſe! Ha! it muſt be ſo. What Eyes ſhe has? What a dull Rogue was I not to ſuſpect this ſooner!

Jacin. Ha! I had forgot—the Ladder is at the Window ſtill, and I will boldly venture by myſelf. [*Riſing briskly, ſees* Ranger.] Ha! a Man! and well dreſt! Ha! Mrs. *Strictland.* are you then at laſt diſhoneſt?

Rang. [*Aſide.*] By all my Wiſhes ſhe is a charming Woman! Lucky Raſcal!

Jacin. But I will, if poſſible, conceal her Shame, and ſtand the brunt of his Impertinence.

Rang. What ſhall I ſay to her? No matter! any thing ſoft will do the Buſineſs. [*Aſide.*

Jacin. Who are you?

Rang. A Man, young Gentleman.

Jacin. And what wou'd you have?

Rang. A Woman.

Jacin. You are very free, Sir. Here are none for you.

Rang. Ay, but there is one, and a fair one too; the moſt charming Creature Nature ever ſet her Hand to; and you are the dear little Pilot, that muſt direct me to her Heart.

Jacin. What mean you, Sir? It is an Office I am not accuſtom'd to.

Rang. You won't have far to go, however. I never make my Errands tedious. It is to your own Heart. Dear Madam, I would have you whiſper in my behalf. Nay, never ſtart. Think you ſuch Beauty could ever be conceal'd from Eyes ſo well acquainted with its Charms?

Jacin. What will become of me! If I cry out, Mrs. *Strictland* is undone. That is my laſt Reſort. [*Aſide.*

Rang. Pardon, dear Lady, the Boldneſs of this Viſit, which your Guardian's Care has forc'd me to.——But I long have lov'd you, long doted on that beauteous Face, and follow'd you from place to place, tho', perhaps, unknown and unregarded.

Jacin. Here's a ſpecial Fellow! [*Aſide.*

Rang. Turn then an Eye of Pity on my Sufferings; and

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and by Heaven—one tender Look from those piercing Eyes—one Touch of this soft Hand———

[*Going to take her Hand.*

Jacin. Hold, Sir—No nearer.

Rang. Would more than repay whole Years of Pain.

Jacin. Hear me. But keep your Distance, or I raise the Family.———

Rang. Blessings on her Tongue, only for prattling to me. [*Aside.*

Jacin. Oh! for a Moment's Courage, and I shall shame him from his Purpose. [*Aside.*] If I were certain so much Gallantry had been shewn on my account only——

Rang. You wrong your Beauty to think that any other could have Power to draw me hither. By all the little Loves that play about your Lips, I swear———

Jacin. You came to me, and me alone!

Rang. By all the thousand Graces that inhabit there, you, and only you, have drawn me hither.

Jacin. Well said.

Rang. By Heaven she comes! ah! honest *Ranger*, I never knew thee fail! ——— [*Aside.*

Jacin. Pray, Sir, where did you leave this Hat?

Rang. That Hat!—That Hat—It's my Hat—I dropt it in the next Chamber as I was looking for yours.

Jacin. How mean and despicable do you look know?

Rang. So! so! I am in a pretty Pickle! [*Aside.*

Jacin. You know by this, that I am acquainted with every thing that has pass'd within: and how ill it agrees with what you have profess'd to me.——Let me advise you, Sir, to be gone immediately. Thro' that Window you may easily get into the Street.—One Scream of mine, the least Noise at that Door will wake the House.

Rang. Say you so? [*Aside.*

Jacin. Believe me, Sir, an injur'd Husband is not so easily appeas'd, and a suspected Wife that is jealous of her Honour———

Rang. Is the Devil, and so let's hear no more of her. Look ye, Madam, [*Getting between the Door and her.*] I have but one Argument left, and that is a strong one. Look on me well, I am as handsom, a strong, well-made Fellow,

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Fellow, as any about Town, and ſince we are alone, as I take it, we can have no occaſion to be more private.

[*Going to lay hold of her.*

Jacin. I have a Reputation, Sir, and will maintain it.

Rang. You have a bewitching Pair of Eyes.

Jacin. Conſider my Virtue. [*Struggling.*

Rang. Conſider your Beauty and my Deſires.

Jacin. If I were a Man, you dar'd not uſe me thus.

Rang. I ſhould not have the ſame Temptation.

Jacin. Hear me, Sir. I will be heard. [*Breaks from him.*] There is a Man who will make you repent this uſage of me.—Oh! *Bellamy*, where art thou now?

Rang. Bellamy!

Jacin. Were he here, you durſt not thus affront me.

[*Burſting out a Crying.*

Rang. His Miſtreſs, on my Soul! [*Aſide.*] You can love, Madam; you can love, I find. Her Tears affect me ſtrangely. [*Aſide.*

Jacin. I am not aſham'd to own my Paſſion for a Man of Virtue and Honour.—I love and glory in it.

Rang. Oh! brave! and you can write Letters, you can. *I will not truſt myſelf Home with you this Evening, becauſe I know it is inconvenient.*

Jacin. Ha!

Rang. Therefore I beg you would procure me a Lodging; it's no matter how far off my Guardian's. Yours, Jacintha.

Jacin. The very Words of my Letter! I am amaz'd. Do you know Mr. *Bellamy?*

Rang. There is not a Man on Earth I have ſo great a Value for: and he muſt have ſome Value for me too, or he would never have ſhewn me your pretty Epiſtle. Think of that, fair Lady. The Ladder is at the Window. And ſo, Madam, I hope delivering you ſafe into his Arms will, in ſome Meaſure, expiate the Crime I have been guilty of to you.

Jacin. Good Heaven, how fortunate is this!

Rang. I believe I make myſelf appear more wicked than I really am. For, damn me, if I do not feel more Satisfaction in the Thoughts of reſtoring you to my Friend, than I could have Pleaſure in any Favour your Bounty could have beſtow'd.

Jacin.

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Jacin. Your Generoſity tranſports me.

Rang. Let us loſe no time then, the Ladder's ready—— Where was you to lodge?

Jacin. At Mr. *Meggot*'s.

Rang. At my Friend *Jacky*'s? better and better ſtill.

Jacin. Are you acquainted with him too?

Rang. Ay, ay! Why, did I not tell you at firſt that I was one of your old Acquaintance? I know all about you, you ſee; tho' the Devil fetch me if ever I ſaw you before. Now, Madam——

Jacin. And now, Sir,——Have with you.

Rang. Then thou art a Girl of Spirit. And tho' I long to hug you for truſting yourſelf with me, I will not beg a ſingle Kiſs, till *Bellamy* himſelf ſhall give me leave. He muſt fight well that takes you from me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The PIAZZA.

Enter Ballamy *and* Frankly.

Bella. PSHA! What impertinent Devil put it into your Head to meddle with my Affairs?

Frank. You know I went thither in Purſuit of another.

Bella. I know nothing you had to do there at all.

Frank. I thought, Mr. *Bellamy*, you were a Lover.

Bella. I am ſo; and therefore ſhould be forgiven this ſudden Warmth.

Frank. And therefore ſhould forgive the fond Impertinence of a Lover.

Bella. Jealouſy, you know, is as natural an Incident to Love——

Frank. As Curioſity. By one Piece of ſilly Curioſity I have gone nigh to ruin both myſelf and you. Let not then your Jealouſy compleat our Misfortunes. I fear I have loſt a Miſtreſs as well as you. Then let us not quarrel. All may come right again.

Bella.

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Bella. It is impossible. She is gone, remov'd for ever from my sight. She is in the Country by this time.

Frank. How did you lose her after we parted?

Bella. By too great Confidence. When I got her to my Chair, the Chairmen were not to be found——And safe as I thought in our Disguise, I actually put her into the Chair, when Mr. *Strickland* and his Servants were in sight; which I had no sooner done, than they surrounded us, overpower'd me, and carry'd her away.

Frank. Unfortunate indeed! Could you not make a second Attempt!

Bella. I had design'd it. But when I came to the Door, I found the Ladder remov'd; and hearing no Noise, seeing no Lights, nor being able to make any Body answer: I concluded all Attempts as impracticable as now I find them. Ha! I see *Lucetta* coming. Then they may be still in Town.

Enter Lucetta.

Lucetta, welcome! What News of *Jacintha*?

Lucet. News, Sir! You fright me out of my Senses! Why, is she not with you?

Bella. What do you mean? With me? I have not seen her since I lost her last Night.

Lucet. Good Heav'n! then she is undone for ever.

Frank. Why, what's the matter?

Bella. Speak out——I'm all Amazement.

Lucet. She is escap'd without any of us knowing how. No body mist her till Morning. We all thought she went away with you. But Heaven knows now what may have happen'd.

Bella. Somebody must have accompanied her in her Flight.

Lucet. We know of No body. We are all in Confusion at home. My Master swears Revenge on you. My Mistress says a Stranger has her.

Bella. A Stranger!

Lucet. But Mrs. *Clarinda*——

Bella. Clarinda! Who is she?

Lucet. [*To* Frankly.] The Lady, Sir, you saw at our House last Night.

Frank.

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Frank. Ha! what of her?

Lucet. She ſays, ſhe is ſure one *Frankly* is the Man: She ſaw them together, and knows it to be true.

Frank. Damn'd Fortune! [*Aſide.*

Lucet. Sure this is not Mr. *Frankly.*

Frank. Nothing will convince him now. [*Aſide.*

Bella. [*Looking at* Frankly.] Ha! 'tis Truth—I ſee it is true. [*Aſide.*] *Lucetta,* run up to *Buckle,* and take him with you to ſearch wherever you can. [*Puts her out.*] Now, Mr *Frankly,* I have found you.—You have uſed me ſo ill, that you force me to forget you are my Friend.

Frank. What do you mean?

Bella. Draw.

Frank. Are you mad? By Heavens! I am innocent.

Bella. I have heard you, and will no longer be impos'd on—Defend yourſelf.

Frank. Nay, if you are ſo hot, I draw to defend myſelf, as I would againſt a Madman.

Enter Ranger.

Rang. What the Devil, Swords at Noonday! Have among you, faith! [*Parts them.*] What's here, *Bellamy?*—Yes, gad, you are *Bellamy,* and you are *Frankly.* Put up, put up both of you—or elſe—I am a deviliſh Fellow when once my Sword is out.

Bella. We ſhall have a time———

Rang. [*Puſhing* Bellamy *one way.*] A time for what?

Frank. I ſhall be always as ready to defend my Innocence as now.

Rang. [*Puſhing* Frankly *t'other way.*] Innocence! ay, to be ſure!—at your Age!—A mighty innocent Fellow, no doubt. But what in the name of Common-ſenſe is it that ails you both? Are you mad? The laſt time I ſaw you, you were hugging and kiſſing; and now you are cutting one another's Throats—I never knew any good come of one Fellow's beſlavering another—But I ſhall put you into better Humour, I warrant you. *Bellamy, Frankly,* liſten both of you—Such Fortune—Such a Scheme———

Bella. Pr'ythee, leave fooling. What, art' drunk?

Frank. He is always ſo, I think.

Rang. And who gave you the Privilege of thinking? Drunk?

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Drunk? no! I am not drunk—Tipsy, perhaps, with my good Fortune—Merry, and in Spirits—Tho' I have not Fire enough to run my Friend thro' the Body. Not drunk, tho' *Jack Meggot* and I have box'd it about—*Champaign* was the Word for two whole Hours, by *Shrewsbury* Clock.

Bella. *Jack Meggot?*—Why, I left him at One going to Bed.

Rang. That may be, but I made a shift to rouse him and his Family, by Four this Morning. Ounds! I pick'd up a Wench and carried her to his House.

Bella. Ha!

Rang. Such a Variety of Adventures——Nay, you shall hear. But before I begin, *Bellamy*, you shall promise me half a dozen Kisses before hand: for the Devil fetch me, if that little Jade, *Jacintha*, would give me one, tho' I prest'd hard.

Bella. Who, *Jacintha*? Pres to kiss *Jacintha*?

Rang. Kiss her! ay! why not? Is she not a Woman, and made to be kiss'd?

Bella. Kiss her!——I shall run distracted!

Rang. How could I help it, when I had her alone, you Rogue, in her Bed-chamber at Midnight? If I had been to be sacrificed, I should have done it.

Bella. Bed-chamber, at Midnight! I can hold no longer.——Draw.

Frank. Be easy, *Bellamy*. [*Interposing.*

Bella. He has been at some of his damn'd Tricks with her.

Frank. Hear him out.

Rang. 'Sdeath! how could I know she was his Mistress? But I tell this Story most miserably. I should have told you first, I was in another Lady's Chamber. By the Lord, I got in at the Window by a Ladder of Ropes.

Frank Ha! another Lady?

Rang. Another. And stole in upon her, whilst she was undressing; beautiful as an Angel, blooming and young—

Frank. What, in the same House?

Bella What is this to *Jacintha?* Ease me of my Pain.

Rang Ay, ay, in the same House, on the same Floor. The sweetest, little Angel—But I design to have another Touch with her. *Frank.*

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Frank. 'Sdeath! but you ſhall have a Touch with me firſt.

Bella. Stay, *Frankly.* [*Interpoſing.*

Rang. Why, what ſtrange Madneſs has poſſeſs'd you both, that No-body muſt kiſs a pretty Wench but yourſelves?

Bella. But what became of *Jacintha?*

Rang. Oonds! what have you done that you muſt monopolize kiſſing?

Frank. Prithee, honeſt *Ranger*, eaſe me of the Pain I am in. Was her Name *Clarinda?*

Bella. Speak, in plain Words, where *Jacintha* is, where to be found——Dear Boy, tell me.

Rang. Ay, now it is, honeſt *Ranger*; and dear Boy, tell me—and a Minute ago, my Throat was to be cut.—I could find in my Heart not to open my Lips. But here comes *Jack Meggot*, who will let you into all the Secret, tho' he deſign'd to keep it from you, in half the time that I can, tho' I had ever ſo great a mind to tell it you.

Enter Jack Meggot.

Jack Meg. So, ſave ye! ſave ye, Lads! We have been frighten'd out of our Wits for you. Not hearing of Mr. *Bellamy*, poor *Jacintha* is ready to ſink for fear of any Accident.

Bella. Is ſhe at your Houſe?

Jack Meg. Why, did not you know that? We diſpatch'd Maſter *Ranger* to you three Hours ago.

Rang. Ay, plague! but I had Buſineſs of my own, and ſo I could not come.—Hark ye, *Frankly*, is your Girl Maid, Wife, or Widow?

Frank. A Maid, I hope.

Rang. The odds are againſt you, *Charles*——But mine is married, you Rogue, and her Husband jealous——The Devil is in it, if I do not yet reap ſome Reward for my laſt Night's Service.

Bella. He has certainly been at Mrs. *Strictland* herſelf. But, *Frankly*, I dare not look on you.

Frank. This one Embrace cancels all Thoughts of Enmity.

Bella. Thou generous Man!——But I muſt haſte to eaſe *Jacintha* of her Fears. [*Exit.*

Frank.

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Frank. And I to make up Matters with *Clarinda.* [*Exit.*

Rang. And I to some kind Wench or other, *Jack.* But where I shall find her, Heaven knows. And so, my Service to your Monkey.

Jack Meg. Adieu, Rattlepate. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Hall of Mr. Strictland's *House.*

Enter Mrs. Strictland *and* Clarinda.

Mrs. Strict. But, why in such a hurry, my Dear? Stay till your Servants can go along with you.

Clar. Oh, no matter! They'll follow with my Things. It is but a little way off, and my Chair will guard me. After my staying out so late last Night, I am sure Mr. *Strictland* will think every Minute an Age whilst I am in his House.

Mrs. Strict. I am as much amaz'd at his suspecting your Innocence as my own: And every time I think of it, I blush at my present Behaviour to you.

Clar. No Ceremony, dear Child.

Mrs. Strict. No, *Clarinda,* I am too well acquainted with your good Humour. But I fear in the Eye of a malicious World, it may look like a Confirmation of his Suspicion.

Clar. My Dear, if the World will speak ill of me, for the little innocent Gaiety, which I think the peculiar Happiness of my Temper, I know no way to prevent it; and am only sorry the World is so ill-natur'd: But I shall not part with my Mirth, I assure them, so long as I know it innocent. I wish, my Dear, this may be the greatest Uneasiness your Husband's Jealousy ever gives you.

Mrs. Strict. I hope he never again may have such Occasion, as he had last Night.

Clar. You are so unfashionable a Wife!—Why, last Night's Accident would have made half the Wives in *London* easy for Life. Has not his Jealousy discover'd itself openly? And are not you innocent? There is nothing but your foolish Temper that prevents his being absolutely in your Power.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Strict. *Clarinda*, this is too serious an Affair to laugh at. Let me advise you, take care of Mr. *Frankly*, observe his Temper well; and if he has the least Taint of Jealousy, cast him off, and never trust to keeping him in your Power.

Clar. You will hear little more of *Frankly*, I believe. Here is Mr. *Strictland*.

Enter Mr. Strictland *and* Lucetta.

Mr. Strict. *Lucetta* says you want me, Madam:

Clar. I troubled you, Sir, only that I might return you Thanks for the Civilities I have receiv'd in your Family, before I took my leave.

Mr. Strict. Keep them to yourself, dear Madam. As it is at my Request that you leave my House, your Thanks upon that Occasion are not very desirable.

Clar. Oh, Sir, you need not fear. My Thanks were only for your Civilities. They will not overburden you. But I'll conform to your Humour, Sir, and part with as little Ceremony——

Mrs. Strict. As we met.

Clar. The Brute! [*Aside.*] My Dear, Good b'ye, we may meet again. [*To Mrs.* Strictland.

Mr. Strict. If you dare trust me with your Hand.

Clar. Lucetta, remember my Instructions. Now, Sir, have with you. [*Mr.* Strictland *leads* Clarinda *out.*

Mrs. Strict. Are her Instructions cruel or kind, *Lucetta*? For I suppose they relate to Mr. *Frankly*.

Lucet. You have a mind to try, if I can keep a Secret, as well as yourself, Madam. But I will shew you I am fit to be trusted by keeping this, tho' it signifies nothing.

Mrs. Strict. This Answer is not so civil, I think.

Lucet. I beg pardon, Madam. I meant it not to offend.

Mrs. Strict. Pray let us have no more such. I neither desire, nor want your Assistance.

Re-enter Mr. Strictland.

Mr. Strict. She is gone. I feel myself somewhat easier already. Since I have begun the Day with Gallantry, Madam, shall I conduct you up?

Mrs. Strict. There is something, Sir, which gives you secret Uneasiness. I wish—— *Mr.*

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Mr. Strict. Perhaps so, Madam, and perhaps it may soon be no Secret at all. [*Leads her out.*

Lucet. Would I were once well settled with my young Lady; for at present, this is but an odd sort of a queer Family. Last Night's Affair puzzles me. A Hat there was that belong'd to none of us, that's certain. Madam was in a Fright, that is as certain; and I brought all off. *Jacintha* escap'd, no one of us knows how. The good Man's Jealousy was yesterday groundless; yet to-day, in my Mind, he is very much in the right. Mighty odd, all this! Somebody knocks! If this should be *Clarinda*'s Spark, I have an odd Message for him too.

[*She opens the Door.*

Enter Frankly.

Frank. So, my pretty Handmaid. Meeting with you gives me some Hopes. May I speak with *Clarinda*?

Lucet. Whom do you want, Sir?

Frank. Clarinda, Child. The young Lady I was admitted to yesterday.

Lucet. Clarinda?——No such Person lives here, I assure you.

Frank. Where then?

Lucet. I don't know indeed, Sir.

Frank. Will you enquire within?

Lucet. Nobody knows in this House, Sir, you will find.

Frank. What do you mean? She is a Friend of *Jacintha*'s, your Lady. I will take my Oath she was here last Night; and you yourself spoke of her being here this Morning—Not know!

Lucet. No. None of us know. She went away of a sudden—no one of us can imagine whither.

Frank. Why, Faith, Child, thou hast a tolerable Face, and hast deliver'd this Denial very handsomly. But let me tell you, your Impertinence this Morning had like'd to have cost me my Life. Now, therefore, make me amends. I come from your young Mistress. I come from Mr. *Bellamy*. I come with my Purse full of Gold (that persuasive Rhetorick) to win you to let me see, and speak to this *Clarinda* once again.

Lucet. She is not here, Sir.

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Frank. Direct me to her.

Lucet. No. I can't do that neither.

Enter Mr. Strictland behind.

Mr. Strict. I heard a knocking at the Door, and a Man's Voice—Ha!— [*Aside.*

Frank. Deliver this Letter to her.

Mr. Strict. By all my Fears, a Letter! [*Aside.*

Lucet. I don't know but I may be tempted to do that.

Frank. Take it then—and with it this.

[*Kisses her, and gives her Money.*

Mr. Strict. Um! there are two Bribes in a Breath! What a Jade she is? [*Aside.*

Lucet. Ay— this Gentleman understands Reason!

Frank. And be assured you oblige your Mistress, while you are serving me.

Mr. Strict. Her Mistress?—Damn'd Sex! and damn'd Wife, thou art an Epitome of that Sex! [*Aside.*

Lucet. And if you can procure me an Answer, your Fee shall be enlarg'd. [*Exit* Frank.

Lucet. The next Step is to get her to read this Letter.

Mr. Strict. [*Snatches the Letter.*] No Noise — but stand silent there, whilst I read this.

[*Breaks it open, and drops the Case.*

Madam, The Gaiety of a Heart happy as mine was yesterday may, I hope, easily excuse the unseasonable Visit I made your House last Night.—Death and the Devil! Confusion! I shall run distracted. It is too much! There was a Man then to whom the Hat belong'd; and I was gull'd, abused, cheated, impos'd on by a Chit, a Girl!—Oh Woman! Woman!—But I will be calm, search it coolly to the Bottom, and have a full Revenge.——

Lucet. [*Aside.*] So here's fine Work! He'll make himself very ridiculous tho'!

Mr. Strict. [Reads on.] *I know my Innocence will appear so manifestly that I need only appeal to the Lady who accompanied you at* Bath. Your very humble Servant, good, innocent, fine Madam *Clarinda.*— *And I do not doubt but her Good-nature,* [Bawd! Bawd!] *will not let you persist in injuring your obedient humble Servant,*

Charles Frankly.

Now,

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Now, who can say my Jealousy lack'd Foundation, or my Suspicion of fine Madam's innocent Gaiety was unjust?—Gaiety! why ay! 'twas Gaiety brought him hither. Gaiety makes her a Bawd.—My Wife may be a Whore in Gaiety. What a Number of Sins become fashionable under the Notion of Gaiety!—What? You receiv'd this Epistle in Gaiety too; and were to deliver it to my Wife, I suppose, when the gay Fit came next upon her.—Why! you impudent young Strumpet, do you laugh at me?

Lucet. I wou'd, if I dared, and heartily.—Be pleas'd, Sir, only to look at that Piece of Paper that lies there.

Mr. Strict. Ha!

Lucet. I have not touched it, Sir. It is the Case that Letter came in, and the Direction will inform you whom I was to deliver it to.

Mr. Strict. This is directed to *Clarinda!*

Lucet. Oh! is it so? Now read it over again, and all your fooliſh Doubts will vaniſh.

Mr. Strict. I have no Doubts at all. I am ſatisfied that you, *Jacintha, Clarinda*, my Wife, all are——

Lucet. Lud! Lud! you would make a Body mad.

Mr. Strict. Hold your impertinent Tongue.

Lucet. You'll find the thing to be juſt as I ſay, Sir.

Mr. Strict. Be gone. [*Exit Lucetta.*] They muſt be poor at the Work, indeed: if they did not lend one another their Names. 'Tis plain, 'tis evident: And I am miſerable. But for my Wife, ſhe ſhall not ſtay one Night longer in my Houſe. Separation, Shame, Contempt ſhall be her Portion. I am determin'd in the thing; and when once it is over, I may perhaps be eaſy. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The STREET.

Clarinda *brought in in a Chair*, Ranger *following.*

Rang. Hark ye, Chairmen? Damn your confounded Trot. Go ſlower.

Clar. Here, ſtop.

Rang. By Heavens! the Monſters hear Reaſon, and obey.

Clar. [*Letting down the Window.*] What troubleſome Fellow was that?

1 *Chairm.* Some Rake, I warrant, that cannot carry himſelf home, and wants us to do it for him.

Clar. There—— And pray do you take care I be not troubled with him. [*Goes in.*

Rang. That's as much as to ſay now, Pray follow me. Madam, you are a charming Woman, and I will do it—

1 *Chairm.* Stand off, Sir.

Rang. Prithee, honeſt Fellow—what—what Writing is that? [*Endeavouring to get in.*

2 *Chairm.* You come not in here!

Rang. Lodgings to be let! a pretty convenient Inſcription, and the Sign of a good modeſt Family! There may be Lodgings for Gentlemen as well as Ladies. Harkye, Rogues? I'll lay you all the Silver I have in my Pocket, there it is, I get in there in ſpite of your Teeth, ye Pimps. [*Throws down Money, and goes in.*

1 *Chairm.* What, have you let the Gentleman in?

2 *Chairm.* I'll tell you what, Partner, he certainly ſlipt by whilſt we were picking up the Money. Come, take up. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

CLARINDA's *LODGINGS.*

A Noiſe within between Ranger *and Landlady.* Clarinda *enters laughing, a Maid following.*

Clar. My Madcap Couſin *Ranger*, as I live. I am ſure he does not know me.—If I cou'd but hide my Face now, what Sport I ſhou'd have! A Mask, a Mask! run and ſee if you can find a Mask.

Maid. I believe there is one above.

Clar. Run, run and fetch it. [*Exit Maid.*

Here he comes! [*Enter* Ranger *and Landlady.*

How unlucky this is! [*Turning from 'em.*

Landl. What's your Buſineſs here, unmannerly Sir?

Rang. Well, let's ſee theſe Lodgings that are to be let.—Gad, a very pretty neat Tenement!—But harkye, is it real and natural, all that, or only patch'd up and new-painted this Summer-ſeaſon, againſt the Town fills?

Landl. What does the ſaucy Fellow mean with his double Tenders here? Get you down——

Digitized by Google *Enter*

Enter Maid with a Mask.

Maid. Here is a very dirty one. [*Aſide to* Clarinda.

Clar. No matter—now we ſhall ſee a little what he won'd be at. [*Aſide.*

Landl. This is an honeſt Houſe.—For all your lac'd Waſtecoat, I'll have you thrown down Neck and Heels.

Rang. Phoh! not in ſuch a Hurry, good old Lady—A Mask!—Nay, with all my Heart. It ſaves a World of Bluſhing—Have you ne'er a one for me?—I am apt to be aſham'd myſelf on theſe Occaſions.

Landl. Get you down, I ſay——.

Rang. Not if I gueſs right, old Lady. Madam, [*To* Clarinda, *who makes Signs to the Landlady to retire.*] look ye there now! that a Woman ſhou'd live to your Age, and know ſo little of the matter. Be gone. [*Exit Landlady.*] By her Forwardneſs, this ſhould be a Whore of Quality. My Boy *Ranger*, thou art in luck to-day.—She won't ſpeak, I find—then I will. [*Aſide.*] Delicate Lodgings truly, Madam; and very neatly furniſh'd.—A very convenient Room this, I muſt needs own, to entertain a mix'd Company.—But my dear charming Creature, does not that Door open to a more commodious Apartment for the Happineſs of a private Friend, or ſo? The pretty Braſs Lock.—Faſt, um! that won't do. 'Sdeath, you are a beautiful Woman! I am ſure you are. Prithee let me ſee your Face. It is your Intereſt, Child.—The longer you delay, the more I ſhall expect. Therefore, [*Taking her Hand.*] my dear, ſoft, kind, new Acquaintance, thus let me take your Hand, and whilſt you gently with the other, let Day-light in upon me: Let me ſoftly hold you to me, that with my longing Lips I may receive the warmeſt, beſt Impreſſion. [*She unmasks.*] *Clarinda!*

Clar. Ha! ha! Your Servant, Couſin *Ranger!*—Ha, ha, ha.

Rang. Oh! your humble Servant, Madam! you had liked to have been beholden to your Mask, Couſin! I muſt brazen it out. [*Aſide.*

Clar. Ha! ha! ha! you were not ſo happy in your Diſguiſe, Sir. The pretty Stagger in your Gate, that happy Diſpoſition of your Wig, the genteel Negligence of

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your whole Person, and those pretty Flowers of modish Gallantry made it impossible to mistake you, my sweet Cuz. Ha, ha.

Rang. Oh! I knew you too, but I fancied you had taken a particular liking to my Person, and had a mind to sink the Relation under that little Piece of black Velvet! And, Egad, you never find me behind-hand in a Frolick. But since it is otherwise, my merry good-humour'd Cousin, I am as heartily glad to see you in Town, as I should be to meet any of my old Bottle Acquaintance.

Clar. And on my Side I am as happy in meeting your Worship, as I should be in a Rencounter with e'er a Petticoat in *Christendom*.

Rang. And if you have any Occasion for a dangling Gallant to *Vauxhall*, *Ranelagh*, or even the poor neglected Park, you are so unlike the rest of your virtuous Sisters of the Petticoat, that I will venture myself with you.

Clar. Take care what you promise; for who knows but this Face you were pleas'd to say so many pretty things of, before you saw it, may raise so many Rivals among your kept Mistress's, and Rep's of Quality——

Rang. Hold! hold! a Truce with your Satire, sweet Cuz; or if Scandal must be the Topick of every virtuous Woman's Conversation—Call for your Tea-Water—And let it be in its proper Element. Come, your Tea; your Tea.

Enter Landlady.

Clar. With all my Heart—Who's there? Get Tea. Upon Condition that you stay till it comes.

Rang. That is according as you behave, Madam.

Clar. Oh! Sir, I am very sensible of the Favour.

Rang. Nay! you may, I assure you; for there is but one Woman of Virtue besides yourself, I would stay with ten Minutes, (and I have not known her above these twelve Hours.) The Insipidity, or the Rancour of their Discourse, is insufferable. 'Sdeath! I had rather take the Air with my Grandmother.

Clar. Ha! ha! ha! the Ladies are highly oblig'd to you, I vow.

Rang.

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Rang. I tell you what, The Lady I speak of was oblig'd to me, and the generous Girl is ready to own it.

Clar. And pray, when was it you did Virtue this considerable Service?

Rang. But this last Night, the Devil fetch me! A romantick Whim of mine convey'd me into her Chamber, where I found her, young and beautiful, alone, at midnight, dress'd like a soft *Adonis*, her lovely Hair all loose about her Shoulders——

Clar. In Boys Cloaths! (this is worth attending to). [*Aside.*

Rang. Gad! I no more suspected her being a Woman, than I did your being my Cater-Cousin.

Clar. How did you discover it at last?

Rang. Why, faith, she very modestly dropt me a Hint of it herself.

Clar. Herself! (if this should be *Jacintha*). [*Aside.*

Rang. Ay! 'foregad, did she! which I imagin'd a good Sign, at midnight. Ha, Cousin? So I e'en invented a long Story of a Passion I had for her, (tho' I had never seen her before)—you know my old Way;—and said so many such tender Things——

Clar. As you said to me just now.

Rang. Pshah! quite in another Stile, I assure you. It was Midnight, and I was in a right Cue.

Clar. Well! And what did she answer to all these Protestations?

Rang. Why, instead of running into my Arms at once, as I expected——

Clar. To be sure.

Rang. 'Gad! like a freehearted honest Girl, she frankly told me, She lik'd another better than she lik'd me; that I had something in my Face that shew'd I was a Gentleman: and she would e'en trust herself with me, if I would give her my Word, I would convey her to her Spark.

Clar. Oh, brave! And how did you bear this?

Rang. Why, curse me, if I am ever angry with a Woman for not having a Passion for me; I only hate your Sex's vain Pretence of having no Passion at all. 'Gad! I loved the good-natured Girl for it; took her at her Word; stole her out of the Window: and this Morning made a very honest Fellow happy in the Possession of her.

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Clar. And her Name is *Jacintha.*

Rang. Ha!

Clar. Your Amours are no Secrets, Sir. You ſee you might as well have told me all, the whole of laſt Night's Adventure; for you find, I know.

Rang. All? Why, what do you know?

Clar. Nay, nothing. I only know, that a Gentleman's Hat cannot be dropt in a Lady's Chamber——

Rang. The Devil!

Clar. But a Husband is ſuch an odd, impertinent, aukward Creature, that he will be ſtumbling over it.

Rang. Here has been fine Work. [*Aſide.*] But how, in the Name of Wonder, ſhould you know all this?

Clar. By being in the ſame Houſe.

Rang. In the ſame Houſe?

Clar. Ay, in the ſame Houſe. A Witneſs of the Confuſion you have made.

Rang. Frankly's Clarinda, by all that's fortunate. It muſt be ſo. [*Aſide.*

Clar. And let me tell you, Sir, that even the dull, low-ſpirited Diverſions you ridicule in us tame Creatures, are preferable to the romantic Exploits that only Wine can raiſe you to.

Rang. Yes, Couſin! But I'll be even with you. [*Aſide.*

Clar. If you reflect, Couſin, you will find a great deal of Wit in ſhocking a Lady's Modeſty, diſturbing her Quiet, tainting her Reputation, and ruining the Peace of a whole Family.

Rang. To be ſure.

Clar. Theſe are the high-mettled Pleaſures of you Men of Spirit, that the Inſipidity of the Virtuous can never arrive at. And can you in reality think your *Burgundy,* and your *Bacchus,* your *Venus,* and your *Loves* an Excuſe for all this? Fy, Couſin, fy.

Rang. No, Couſin.

Clar. What, dumb? I am glad you have Modeſty enough left not to go about to excuſe yourſelf.

Rang. It is as you ſay. When we are ſober, and reflect but ever ſo little on the Follies we commit, we are aſham'd and ſorry; and yet the very next Minute, we run again into the very ſame Abſurdities.

Clar.

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Clar. What? Moralizing, Couſin! Ha! ha! ha!

Rang. What you know is not half, not a hundredth Part of the Miſchief of my laſt Night's Frolick. And yet, the very next Petticoat I ſaw this Morning, I muſt follow it, and be damn'd to me. Tho' for ought I know, poor *Frankly*'s Life may depend upon it.

Clar. Whoſe Life, Sir?

Rang. And here do I ſtand prating to you now.

Clar. Pray, good Couſin, explain yourſelf.

Rang. Good Couſin! She has it. [*Aſide.*] Why, whilſt I was making off with the Wench, *Bellamy* and he were quarrelling about her: And tho' *Jacintha* and I made all the haſte we could, we did not get to them before—

Clar. Before what? (I'm frighten'd out of my Wits).

Rang. Not that *Frankly* car'd three Half-pence for the Girl.

Clar. But there was no Miſchief done, I hope.

Rang. Pho! a ſlight Scratch. Nothing at all, as the Surgeon ſaid: Tho' he was but a queer-looking Son of a Bitch of a Surgeon neither.

Clar. Good God! Why, he ſhould have the beſt that can be found in *London*.

Rang. Ay, indeed, ſo he ſhould. That was what I was going for, when I ſaw you. [*Sits down.*] They are all at *Jack Meggot*'s hard by, and you will keep me here.

Clar. I keep you here! For Heaven's ſake begone.

Rang. Your Tea is a damn'd while a coming.

Clar. You ſhall have no Tea now, I aſſure you.

Rang. Nay! One Diſh.

Clar. No, poſitively, you ſhall not ſtay.

Rang. Your Commands are abſolute, Madam. [*Going.*

Clar. Then *Frankly* is true, and I only am to blame.

Rang. [*Returns.*] But I beg ten thouſand Pardons, Couſin, that I ſhould forget to ſalute you.

Clar. Pſhah! How can you trifle at ſuch a Time as this?

Rang. A Trifle! Wrong not your Beauty.

Clar Lord! How teizing you are? There.

Rang. [*Kiſſes her.*] Poor thing! how uneaſy ſhe is! Nay, no Ceremony. You ſhall not ſtir a Step with me.

Clar. I do not intend it. This is downright provoking. [*Exit Ranger.*] Who's there?

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Enter Landlady.

Landl. Madam, did your Ladyſhip call?

Clar. Does one Mr. *Meggot* live in this Neighbourhood?

Landl. Yes, Madam, a fine Gentleman, and keeps a noble Houſe, and a World of Company.

Clar. Very well. I don't want his Hiſtory. I wonder my Servants are not come yet.

Landl. Lack-a-day, Madam, they are all below.

Clar. Send up one then with a Card to me. I muſt know the Truth of this Affair immediately. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Room in Mr. Strictland's *Houſe. Mr. and Mrs.* Strictland *diſcover'd; ſhe weeping, and he writing at a Table.*

Mrs. STRICTLAND.

HEigh! Ho!

Mr. Strict. What can poſſibly be the Occaſion of that Sigh, Madam? You have yourſelf agreed to a Maintenance, and a Maintenance no Dutcheſs need be aſham'd of.

Mrs. Strict. But the Extremities of Provocation that drove me to that Agreement——

Mr. Strict. Were the Effect of your own Follies. Why do you diſturb me? [*Writes on.*

Mrs. Strict. I would not willingly give you a Moment's Uneaſineſs. I but deſire a fair and equal Hearing: And if I ſatisfy you not in every Point, then abandon me, diſcard me to the World, and its malicious Tongues.

Mr. Strict. What was it you ſaid?——Damn this Pen.

Mrs. Strict. I ſay, Mr. *Strictland*, I would only——

Mr. Strict. You would only!——You would only repeat what you have been ſaying this Hour, *I am innocent*; and when I ſhew'd you the Letter I had taken from your Maid, what was then your poor Evaſion, but that *it was to* Clarinda, *and you were innocent?* *Mrs.*

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Mrs. Strict. Heaven knows I am innocent.

Mr. Strict. But I know your *Charinda*, your Woman of Honour is your Blind, your Cover, your——But why do I distract myself about a Woman I have no longer any Concerns with? Here, Madam, is your Fate. A Letter to your Brother in the Country.

Mrs. Strict. Sir——

Mr. Strict. I have told him what a Sister he is to receive, and how bid her welcome.

Mrs. Strict. Then my Ruin is compleat. My Brother!

Mr. Strict. I must vindicate my own Honour. Else what will the World say?

Mrs. Strict. That Brother was my only Hope, my only Ground of Patience. In his Retirement I hoped my Name might have been safe, and kept, till by some happy Means you might at length have known me innocent, and pitied me.

Mr. Strict. Retirement! pretty Soul! No! No! That Face was never made for Retirement. It is another Sort of Retiring you are fittest for.—Ha! Hark! What's that? [*A Knocking at the Door.*] Two gentle Taps--And why but two? Was that the Signal, Madam? Stir not on your Life.

Mrs. Strict. Give me Resolution, Heaven, to bear this Usage, and keep it secret from the World. [*Aside.*

Mr. Strict. I will have no Signs, no *Items*. No Hem to tell him I am here. Ha! another Tap. The Gentleman is in haste, I find. [*Opens the Door, and Enter Tester.*] *Tester!* why did you not come in, Rascal? [*Beats him.*] All Vexations meet to cross me.

Tester. Lard, Sir! What do you strike me for? My Mistress order'd me never to come in where she was, without first knocking at the Door.

Mr. Strict. Oh, cunning Devil! *Tester* is too honest to be trusted!

Mrs. Strict. Unhappy Man! Will nothing undeceive him? [*Aside.*

Tester. Sir, here is a Letter.

Mr. Strict. To my Wife?

Tester. No, Sir, to you. The Servant waits below.

Mr. Strict. Art sure it is a Servant?

Tester. Sir. [*Staring.*] It is Mr. *Bubble*, Sir.

Mr.

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Mr. Strict. I am mad. I know not what I ſay, or do, or think. But let's read. [*Reads to himſelf.*

Sir, We cannot bear to reflect that Mrs. Strictland *may poſſibly be ruin'd in your Eſteem, and in the Voice of the World, only by the Confuſion which our Affair has made in your Family, without offering all within our Power to clear the Miſunderſtanding between you. If you will give yourſelf the Trouble but to ſtep to Mr.* Meggot's, *where all the Parties will be; we doubt not but we can entirely ſatisfy your moſt flagrant Suſpicions, to the Honour of Mrs.* Strictland, *and the Quiet of your Lives.* Jacintha, John Bellamy.

Hey! Here is the whole Gang witneſſing for one another. They think I am an Aſs, and will be led by the Noſe to believe every thing. Call me a Chair. [*Exit* Teſter.] Yes, I will go to this Rendezvous of Enemies ——I will——and find out all her Plots, her Artifices and Contrivances. It will clear my Conduct to her Brother, and all her Friends. [*Exit Mr.* Strictland.

Mrs. Strict. Gone, ſo abruptly! What can that Letter be about? No Matter. There is no Way left to make us eaſy but by my Diſgrace, and I muſt learn to ſuffer. Time and Innocence will teach me to bear it patiently.

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Mrs. *Bellamy*, Madam, (for my young Lady is married) begs you would follow Mr. *Strictland* to Mr. *Meggot's*. She makes no doubt but ſhe ſhall be able to make you and my Maſter eaſy.

Mrs. Strict. But how came ſhe to know any thing of the Matter?

Lucet. I have been with them, Madam. I could not bear to ſee ſo good a Lady ſo ill treated.

Mrs. Strict. I am indeed, *Lucetta*, ill treated. But I hope this Day will be the laſt of it.

Lucet. Madam *Clarinda* and Mr. *Frankly* will be there: And the young Gentleman, Madam, who was with you in this Room laſt Night.

Mrs. Strict. Ha! if He is there, there may be Hopes; and it is worth the trying.

Lucet.

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Lucet. Dear Lady—Let me call a Chair.

Mrs. Strict. I go with you. I cannot be more wretched than I am. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in Meggot's *Houſe.*

Enter Frankly, Ranger, Bellamy, Jacintha, *and* Meggot.

Frank. Oh, *Ranger!* This is News indeed. Your Couſin, and a Lady of ſuch Fortune!

Rang. I have done the Buſineſs for you. I tell you ſhe's your own. She loves you.

Frank. Words are too faint to tell the Joy, I feel.

Rang. I have put that Heart of hers into ſuch a Flutter, that I'll lay a hundred Guineas, with the Aſſiſtance which this Lady has promis'd me, I fix her yours directly.

Jacin. Ay, ay, Mr. *Frankly,* we have a Deſign upon her which cannot fail. But you muſt obey Orders.

Frank. Moſt willingly. But remember, dear Lady, I have more than Life at Stake.

Jacin. Away then into the next Room; for ſhe is this Inſtant coming hither.

Frank. Hither? You ſurpriſe me more and more.

Jacin. Here is a Meſſage from her, by which ſhe deſires leave to wait on me this Afternoon.

Rang. Only for the Chance of ſeeing you here, I aſſure ye.

Frank. Let me hug thee, tho' I know not how to believe it.

Rang. Pſha! Prithee, do not ſtifle me! It is a buſy Day, a very buſy Day.

Jack Meg. Thou art the moſt unaccountable Creature in Life.

Rang. But the moſt lucky one, *Jack,* if I ſucceed for *Frankly,* as I have for *Bellamy;* and my Heart whiſpers me I ſhall. Come in, moſt noble Mr. *Buckle:* And what have you to propoſe?

Enter Buckle.

Buckle. A Lady, Madam, in a Chair, ſays her Name is *Clarinda.* *Jacin.*

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Jacin. Desire her to walk up.

Bella. How could you let her wait? [*Exit* Buckle.] You must excuse him, Madam. *Buckle* is a true Bachelor's Servant, and knows no Manners.

Jacin. Away, away, Mr. *Frankly*, and stay till I call you. A Rap with my Fan shall be the Signal. [*Exit* Frankly.] We make very free with your House, Mr. *Meggot*.

Jack Meg. Oh! You could not oblige me more!

Enter Clarinda.

Clar. Dear Mrs. *Bellamy*, pity my Confusion. I am to wish you Joy, and ask your Pardon all in a Breath. I know not what to say. I am quite asham'd of my last Night's Behaviour.

Jacin. Come, come, *Clarinda*, it is all well. All is over and forgot. Mr. *Bellamy*——— [*Salutes.*

Clar. I wish you Joy, Sir, with all my Heart, and should have been very sorry if any Folly of mine had prevented it.

Bella. Madam, I am oblig'd to you.

Clar. [*Aside.*] I see nothing of Mr. *Frankly!* My Heart misgives me.

Rang. And so, you came hither purely out of Friendship, Good-nature, and Humility.

Clar. Purely.

Rang. To confess your Offences, to beg Pardon, and to make Reparation.

Clar. Purely. Is this any thing so extraordinary?

Jack Meg. The most so of any thing in Life, I think.

Rang. A very whimsical Business for so fine a Lady, and an Errand you seldom went on before, I fancy, my dear Cousin.

Jacin. Never, I dare swear, if I may judge by the awkward Concern she shews in delivering it.

Clar. Concern? Lard! well! I protest, you are all exceeding pretty Company! Being settled for Life, *Jacintha*, gives an ease to the Mind, that brightens Conversation strangely.

Jacin. I am sorry, with all my Heart, you are not in the same Condition; for as you are, my Dear, you are horridly *chagrine*.

Rang.

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Rang. But with a little of our Help, Madam, the Lady may recover, and be very good Company.

Clar. Hum! What does he mean, Mr. *Bellamy?*

Bella. Ask him, Madam.

Clar. Indeed I shall not give myself the Trouble.

Jacin. Then you know what he means.

Clar. Something impertinent, I suppose, not worth explaining.

Jacin. It is something you won't let him explain, I find.

Enter a Servant, and whispers Meggot.

Jack Meg. Very well! Desire him to walk into the Parlour. Madam, the Gentleman is below.

Jacin. Then every one to your Post. You know your Cues.

Rang. I warrant ye. [*Exeunt Gentlemen.*

Clar. All gone! I am glad of it, for I want to speak to you.

Jacin. And I, my dear *Clarinda*, have something which I do not know how to tell you. But it must be known, sooner or later.

Clar. What's the matter?

Jacin. Poor Mr. *Frankly*——

Clar. You fright me out of my Senses!

Jacin. Has no Wounds, but what you can cure. Ha! ha! ha!

Clar. Pshah! I am angry.

Jacin. Pshah! You are pleas'd——And will be more so, when I tell you, this Man, whom Fortune has thrown in your Way, is, in Rank and Temper, the Man in the World, who suits you best for a Husband.

Clar. Husband! I say, Husband, indeed! Where will this end? [*Aside.*

Jacin. His very Soul is yours, and he only waits an Opportunity of telling you so. He is in the next Room. Shall I call him in?

Clar. My dear Girl, hold!

Jacin. How foolish is this Coyness now, *Clarinda?* If the Man were here indeed, something might be said.—— And so, Mr. *Frankly!*

Clar. How can you be so teazing?

Jacin.

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Jacin. Nay, I am in downright Earneſt. And to ſhew you how particular I have been in my Enquiries, tho' I know you have a Spirit above regarding the modiſh, paltry way of a *Smithfield* Bargain——His Fortune——

Clar. I don't care what his Fortune is.

Jacin. Don't ye ſo? Then you are farther gone than I thought you were.

Clar. No, Pſha! Pr'ythee I don't mean ſo neither.

Jacin. I don't care what you mean. But you won't like him the worſe, I hope, for having a Fortune ſuperior to your own. Now, ſhall I call him in?

Clar. Pho! dear Girl——Some other time.

Jacin. [*Raps with her Fan.*] That's the Signal, and here he is. You ſhall not ſtir. I poſitively will leave you together. [*Exit* Jacintha.

Clar. I tremble all over.

Enter Frankly.

Frank. Pardon this Freedom, Madam,——But I hope our having ſo luckily met with a common Friend in Mrs. *Bellamy*——

Clar. Sir!

Frank. Makes any farther Apology for my Behaviour laſt Night abſolutely unneceſſary.

Clar. So far, Mr. *Frankly*, that I think the Apology ſhould be rather on my ſide, for the impertinent Buſtle I made about her.

Frank. This Behaviour gives me Hopes, Madam. Pardon the Conſtruction——But from the little Buſtle you made about the Lady, may I not hope, you was not quite indifferent about the Gentleman?

Clar. Have a care of being too ſanguine in your Hopes. Might not a Love of Power, or the Satisfaction of ſhewing that Power, or the dear Pleaſure of abuſing that Power; might not theſe have been Foundation enough for more than what I did?

Frank. Charming Woman! — With moſt of your Sex, I grant, they might, but not with you. Whatever Power your Beauty gives, your Good-nature will allow you no other uſe of it, than to oblige.

Clar. This is the Height of Compliment, Mr. *Frankly*.

Frank.

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Frank. Not in my Opinion, I aſſure you, Madam; and I am now going to put it to the Trial.

Clar. [*Aſide.*] What is he going to ſay now?

Frank. [*Aſide.*] What is it that ails me, that I cannot ſpeak? Pſha! he here!

Enter Ranger.

Clar. Interrupted! impertinent!

Rang. There is no ſight ſo ridiculous as a Pair of your true Lovers. Here are you two now, bowing and cringing, and keeping a Paſſion ſecret from one another, that is no Secret to all the Houſe beſide. And if you don't make the matter up immediately, it will be all over the Town within theſe two Hours.

Clar. What do you mean?

Frank. Ranger——

Rang. Do you be quiet, can't ye! [*Aſide.*] But it is over, I ſuppoſe, Couſin, and you have given him your Conſent.

Clar. Sir, the Liberties you are pleas'd to take with me—

Rang. Oh! in your Airs ſtill, are you? Why then, Mr. *Frankly*, there is a certain Letter of yours, Sir, to this Lady——

Clar. A Letter to me!

Rang. Ay! to you, Madam.

Frank. Ha! what of that Letter?

Rang. It is only fallen into Mr. *Striſtland*'s Hands, that is all; and he has read it.

Frank. Read it!

Rang. Ay! read it to all his Family at home, and to all the Company below: And if ſome Stop be not put to it, it will be read in all the Coffee-houſes in Town.

Frank. A Stop! This Sword ſhall put a Stop to it, or I will periſh in the Attempt.

Rang. But will that Sword put a Stop to the Talk of the Town?——Only make it talk the faſter, take my Word for it.

Clar. This is all a Trick.

Rang. Is it ſo? you ſhall ſoon ſee that, my fine Couſin. [*Exit* Ranger.

Frank. It is but too true, I fear. There is ſuch a Letter which I gave *Lucetta*. Can you forgive me? Was

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I much to blame, when I could neither see, nor hear of you?

Clar. [*Tenderly.*] You give yourself, Mr. *Frankly*, a Thousand more Uneasinesses than you need about me.

Frank. If this Uneasiness but convinces you how much I love you——Interrupted again!

Clar. [*Aside.*] This is downright Malice.

Enter Ranger, *follow'd by* Jacintha, *Mr.* Strictland, Bellamy, *and* Meggot.

Rang. Enter, enter, Gentlemen and Lady.

Clar. Mr. *Strictland* here! What is all this?

Rang. Now you shall see whether this is a Trick or no.

Jacin. Do not be uneasy, my Dear; we will explain it to you.

Frank. I cannot bear this trifling, *Ranger*, when my Heart is on the rack.

Rang. Come this way then, and learn.

[Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly, *and* Ranger *retire.*

[*Mr.* Strictland, Bellamy, *and* Meggot *advance.*

Mr. Strict. Why, I know not well what to say. This has a Face. This Letter may as well agree with *Clarinda* as with my Wife, as you have told the Story; and *Lucetta* explain'd it so——But she for a Sixpenny Piece would have construe'd it the other way.

Jack Meg. But, Sir, if we produce this Mr. *Frankly* to you, and he owns himself the Author of this Letter——

Bella And if *Clarinda* likewise be brought before your Face to encourage his Addresses, there can be no farther Room for Doubt.

Mr. Strict. No.—Let that appear, and I shall—I think I shall be satisfied——But yet it cannot be——

Bella. Why not? Hear me, Sir. [*They talk.*

[Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly, *and* Ranger *advance.*

Jacin. In short, *Clarinda*, unless the Affair is made up directly: a Separation, with all the Obloquy on her Side, must be the Consequence.

Clar. Poor Mrs. *Strictland*, I pity her; but for him, he deserves all he feels were it ten times what it is.

Jacin. It is for her sake only, that we beg of you both to bear with his Impertinence.

Clar.

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Clar. With all my Heart. You will do what you please with me.

Frank. Generous Creature!

Mr. Strict. Ha! here she is, and with her the very Man I saw deliver the Letter to *Lucetta*—I do begin to fear I have made myself a Fool—Now for the Proof.—Here is a Letter, Sir, which has given me great Disturbance, and these Gentlemen assure me it was writ by you.

Frank. That Letter, Sir, upon my Honour I left this Morning with *Lucetta*, for this Lady.

Mrs. Strict. For that Lady! and, *Frankly*, the Name at the bottom, is not feign'd, but your real Name?

Frank. Frankly is my Name.

Mr. Strict. I see, I feel myself ridiculous.

Jacin. Now, Mr. *Strictland*—I hope——

Jack Meg. Ay! ay! a clear Case.

Mr. Strict. I am satisfied, and will go this Instant to *Mrs. Strictland*.

Rang. Why then the Devil fetch me, if this would satisfy me.

Mr. Strict. What's that?

Rang. Nay, nothing. It is no Affair of mine.

Bella. What do you mean, *Ranger*?

Mr. Strict. Ay! what do you mean? I will know before I stir.

Rang. With all my Heart, Sir. Cannot you see that all this may be a concerted Matter between them?

Frank. Ranger, you know I can resent.

Mr. Strict. Go on.—I will defend you, let who will resent it.

Rang. Why then, Sir, I declare myself your Friend: and were I as you—nothing but their immediate Marriage should convince me.

Mr. Strict. Sir, You're right, and are my Friend, indeed. Give me your Hand.

Rang. Nay, were I to hear her say, I, *Clarinda*, take thee *Charles*, I would not believe them 'till I saw them a-bed together. Now resent it as you will.

Mr. Strict. Ay, Sir, as you will. But nothing less shall convince me; and so, my fine Lady, if you are in earnest——

Clar.

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Clar. Sure, Mr. *Strictland*——

Mr. Strict. Nay, no flouncing! You cannot escape.

Rang. Why, *Frankly*, has't no Soul?

Frank. I pity her Confusion.

Rang. Pity her Confusion?—the Man's a Fool—Here, take her Hand——

Frank. Thus on my Knees then, let me ravish with your Hand, your Heart.

Clar. Ravish it you cannot; for it is with all my Heart I give it you.

Mr. Strict. I am satisfied.

Clar. And so am I, now it once is over.

Rang. And so am I, my dainty Cousin—And I wish you Joy of a Man, your whole Sex would go to Cuffs for, if they knew him but half so well as I do—Ha! She here? This is more than I bargain'd for. [*Aside.*

Jacintha *leads in Mrs.* Strictland.

Mr. Strict. [*Embracing Mrs. Strictland*] Madam, reproach me not with my Folly, and you shall never hear of it again.

Mrs. Strict. Reproach you? No! if ever you hear the least Reflection pass my Lips, forsake me in that Instant. Or, what would yet be worse, suspect again.

Mr. Strict. It is enough. I am asham'd to talk to thee.—This Letter which I wrote your Brother, thus I tear in Pieces, and with it part for ever with my Jealousy.

Mrs. Strict. This is a Joy, indeed! as great as unexpected. Yet there is one thing wanting to make it lasting.

Rang. What the Devil is coming now? [*Aside.*

Mrs. Strict. Be assur'd, every other Suspicion of me was as unjust as your last; tho' perhaps you had more Foundations for your Fears.

Rang. She won't tell, sure, for her own sake. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Strict. All must be clear'd before my Heart will be at Ease.

Rang. It looks plaguy like it, tho'! [*Aside.*

Mr. Strict. What mean you? I am all Attention.

Mrs. Strict. There was a Man, as you suspected, in my Chamber last Night.

Mr. Strict. Ha! take care, I shall relapse.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Strict. That Gentleman was he——

Rang. Here is a Devil for you! [*Aſide.*

Mrs. Strict. Let him explain the reſt.

Rang. A Frolick! a meer Frolick! on my Life.

Mr. Strict. A Frolick! Zound! [*They interpoſe.*

Rang. Nay don't let us quarrel the very Moment you declar'd yourſelf my Friend. There was no Harm done, I promiſe you. Nay, never frown. After I have told my Story, any Satisfaction you are pleas'd to ask, I ſhall be ready to give.

Mr. Strict. Be quick then, and eaſe me of my Pain.

Rang. Why then, as I was ſtrolling about laſt Night, ——upon the Look-out, I muſt confeſs——Chance, and Chance only convey'd me to your Houſe: where I eſpied a Ladder of Ropes moſt invitingly faſten'd to the Window.

Jacin. Which Ladder I had faſten'd for my Eſcape.

Mr. Strict. Proceed.

Rang. Up mounted I, and up I ſhould have gone, if it had been into the Garret. I open'd one Door, then another, and, to my great Surpriſe, the whole Houſe was ſilent. At laſt, I ſtole into a Room where this Lady was undreſſing.

Mr. Strict. 'Sdeath and the Devil! you did not dare, ſure——

Rang. I don't know whether I had dared, or no: if I had not heard the Maid ſay ſomething of her Maſter's being jealous. Oh!——Damn me, thought I, then the Work is half done to my Hands.

Jacin. Do you mind that, Mr. *Strictland?*

Mr. Strict. I do——I do, moſt feelingly.

Rang. The Maid grew ſaucy, and, moſt conveniently to my Wiſhes, was turn'd out of the Room; and if you had not the beſt Wife in the World——

Mr. Strict. Ounds! Sir, but what Right have you——

Rang. What Right, Sir? If you will be jealous of your Wife without a Cauſe; If you will be out at that time of Night, when you might have been ſo much better employ'd at home: We young Fellows think we have a Right——

Mr. Strict. No joking, I beſeech you. You know not what I feel.

Rang.

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Rang. Then ſeriouſly, I was mad, or drunk enough, call it which you will, to be very rude to this Lady; for which I ask both her Pardon and yours! I am an odd ſort of a Fellow, perhaps: But I am above telling you, or any Man, a Lye—Damn me if I am not.

Mr. Strict. I muſt, I cannot but believe you; and for the future, Madam, you ſhall find here a Heart ready to love and truſt you. No Tears, I beg. I cannot bear them.

Mrs. Strict. I cannot ſpeak, and yet there is a Favour, Sir——

Mr. Strict. Underſtand you—And, as a Proof of the Sincerity with which I ſpeak, I beg it as a Favour of this Lady, in particular, [*To* Clarinda] and of all the Company in general, to return to my Houſe immediately: where every thing, Mr. *Bellamy*, ſhall be ſettled to your entire Satisfaction.——No Thanks; I have not deſerv'd them.

Jack Meg. I beg your Pardon, Sir. The Fiddles are ready. Mrs. *Bellamy* has promis'd me her Hand, and I won't part with one of you till Midnight; and if you are as well ſatisfied as you pretend to be, let our Friend *Rattle* here begin the Ball with Mrs. *Strictland*; for he ſeems to be the Hero of the Day.

Mr. Strict. As you and the Company pleaſe.

Rang. Why, this is honeſt. Continue but in this Humour, and Faith! Sir, you may truſt me to run about your Houſe like a Spaniel!—I cannot ſufficiently admire at the Whimſicalneſs of my good Fortune, in being ſo inſtrumental to this general Happineſs—*Bellamy*, *Frankly*, I wiſh you Joy with all my Heart (tho' I had rather you ſhould be married than I, for all that). Never did Matrimony appear to me with a Smile upon her Face, 'till this Inſtant.

Sure Joys for ever wait each happy Pair,
When Senſe the Man, and Virtue crowns the Fair;
And kind Compliance proves their mutual Care.

[*A Dance.*

EPI-

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EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mrs. *PRITCHARD.*

THO' the young Smarts, I see, begin to sneer,
And the old Sinners cast a wicked Leer:
Be not alarm'd, ye Fair—You've nought to fear.
No wanton Hint, no loose ambiguous Sense,
Shall flatter vicious Taste at your Expence.
Leaving for once these shameless Arts in vogue:
We give a Fable *for the* Epilogue.

AN Ass *there was, our Author had me say,*
Who needs must write—He did—And wrote a Play.
The Parts were cast to various Beasts and Fowl:
Their Stage a Barn;—The Manager an Owl.
The House was cramm'd at Six, with Friends and Foes;
Rakes, Wits, and Criticks, Citizens and Beaux.
These Characters appear'd in different Shapes
Of Tigers, Foxes, Horses, Bulls and Apes;
With others too, of lower Rank and Station:—
A perfect Abstract of the Brute Creation.
Each, as he felt, mark'd out the Author's Faults,
And thus the Connoisseurs *express'd their Thoughts.*
The Critick-curs *first snarl'd—The Rules are broke.*
Time, Place, and Action, sacrific'd to Joke.
The Goats *cry'd out, 'Twas formal, dull, and chaste—*
Not writ for Beasts of Gallantry and Taste.
The Horned-Cattle *were in piteous taking,*
At Fornication, Rapes, and Cuckold making.
The Tigers *swore, He wanted Fire and Passion.*
The Apes *condemn'd—because it was the Fashion.*

The

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EPILOGUE.

The generous Steeds *allow'd him proper Merit:*
Here mark'd his Faults, and there approv'd his Spirit.
While Brother-Bards *bray'd forth with uſual Spleen,*
And, as they heard, exploded every Scene.
When Reynard's *Thoughts were aſk'd, the ſtrugging Sage,*
Fam'd for Hypocriſy, and worn with Age,
Condemn'd, the ſhameleſs Licence of the Stage.
At which the Monkey skipp'd from Box to Box,
And whiſper'd round, the Judgment of the Fox;
Abus'd the Moderns; talk'd of Rome *and* Greece;
Bill'd every Box-keeper; and damn'd the Piece.

Now every Fable has a Moral to it.——
Be Churchman, Stateſman, any thing——but Poet.
In Law, or Phyſick, Quack in what you will;
Cant and Grimace conceal the want of Skill.
Secure in theſe, his Gravity *may paſs——*
But here no Artifice can hide the Aſs.

FINIS.

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